THE · WORLD
··DECISION··

Robert·Herrick

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THE WORLD DECISION

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BY

ROBERT HERRICK

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THE WORLD DECISION

PART ONE · · ITALY

THE WORLD DECISION

PART ONE — ITALY

I

Italy Hesitates

LAST April, when I left New York for Europe, Italy was "on the verge" of entering the great war. According to the meager reports that a strict censorship permitted to reach the world, Italy had been hesitating for many months between a continuance of her precarious neutrality and joining with the Allies, with an intermittent war fever in her pulses. It was known that she was buying supplies for her ill-equipped army — boots and food and arms. Nevertheless, American opinion had come to the somewhat cynical belief that Italy would never get further than the verge of war; that her Austrian ally would be induced by the pressure of necessity to concede enough of those "national aspirations," of which we had heard much, to keep her southern neighbor at least lukewarmly neutral until the conclusion of the war. An American diplomat in Italy, with the best opportunity for close observation, said, as late as the middle of May: "I shall believe that Italy will go into the war only when I see it!"

The process of squeezing her Austrian ally when the latter was in a tight place — as Italy's negotiating was interpreted commonly in America — naturally aroused little enthusiasm for the nation, and when suddenly, during the stormy weeks of mid-May, Italy made her decision and broke with Austria, Americans inferred, erroneously, that her "sordid" bargaining having met with a stubborn resistance from Vienna, there was nothing left for a government that had spent millions in war preparation but to declare war. The affair had that surface appearance, which was noisily proclaimed by Germany to the world. Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's sneer concerning the "voice of the piazza having prevailed" revealed not merely pique, but also a complete misunderstanding, a Teutonic misapprehension of the underlying motives that led to an inevitable step. No one who witnessed, as I did at close range, the swift unfolding of the drama which ended on May 23 in a declaration of war, can accept such a base or trivial reading of the matter. Like all things human the psychology of Italy's action was complex, woven in an intricate pattern, nevertheless at its base simple and inevitable, granted the fundamental racial postulates. Old impulses stirred in the Italians as well as new. Italy repeated according to the modern formula the ancient defiance by her Roman forefathers of the Teutonic danger. "*Fuori i barbari*" — out with the barbarians — has lain in the blood of

Italy for two thousand years, to be roused to a fresh heat of hate by outraged Belgium, by invaded France, by the Lusitania murders. Less conscious, perhaps, but not less mighty as a moving force than this personal antagonism was the spiritual antagonism between the Latin and the German, between the two visions of the world which the German and the Latin imagine and seek to perpetuate. That in a large and very real sense this world agony of war is the supreme struggle between these two opposed traditions of civilization — a decision between two competing forms of life — seems to me so obvious as to need no argument. In such a struggle Italy must, by compulsion of historical tradition as well as of political situation, take her part on the side of those who from one angle or another are upholding with their lives the inheritance of Rome against the pretensions of force — law, justice, mercy, beauty against the dead weight of physical and material strength.

* * *

One had no more than put foot on the quay at Naples before the atmosphere of fateful hesitation in which Italy had lived for eight months became evident to the senses of the traveler. Naples was less strident, less vocal than ever before. That mob of hungry Neapolitans, which usually seizes violent hold of the stranger and his effects, was thin and spiritless. Naples was

almost quiet. The Santa Lucia was deserted; the line of pretentious hotels with drawn shutters had the air of a summer resort out of season. The war had cut off Italy's greatest source of ready money — the idler. Naples was living to itself a subdued, zestless life. Cook's was an empty inutility. The sunny slopes of Sorrento, where during the last generation the German has established himself in all favorable sites, were thick with signs of sale.

In other respects there were indications of prosperity — more building, cleaner streets, better shops. In the dozen years since I had been there, Italy had undoubtedly prospered, and even this beggar's paradise of sun and tourists had bettered itself after the modern way. I saw abundant signs of the new Italy of industrial expansion, which under German tutelage had begun to manufacture, to own ships, and to exploit itself. And there were also signs of war-time bloat — the immense cotton business. Naples as well as Genoa was stuffed with American cotton, the quays piled with the bales that could not be got into warehouses. It took a large credulity to believe that all this cotton was to satisfy Italian wants. Cotton, as everybody knew, was going across the Alps by the trainload. Nevertheless, our ship, which had a goodly amount of the stuff, was held at Gibraltar only a day until the English Government decided to accept the guarantees of consul and Italian Ambassador that it was legiti-

mately destined for Italian factories — a straw indicating England's perplexity in the cotton business, especially with a nation that might any day become an ally! It would be wiser to let a little more cotton leak into Germany through Switzerland than to agitate the question of contraband at this delicate moment.

The cotton brokers, the grain merchants, and a few others were making money out of Italy's neutrality, and *neutralista* sentiment was naturally strong among these classes and their satellites. No doubt they did their best to give an impression of nationalism to the creed of their pockets. But a serious-minded merchant from Milan who dined opposite me on the way to Rome expressed the prevailing beliefs of his class as well as any one, — "War, yes, in time. . . . It must come. . . . But first we must be ready — we are not quite ready yet"; and he predicted almost to a day when Italy, finding herself ready, would enter the great conflict. He showed no enthusiasm either for or against war: his was a curiously fatalistic attitude of mind, an acceptance of the inevitable, which the American finds so hard to understand.

* * *

And this was the prevailing note of Rome those early days of May — a dull, passive acceptance of the dreaded fate which had been threatening for so many months on the national horizon, ever

since Austria plumped her brutal ultimatum upon little Serbia. There were no vivid debates, no pronounced current of opinion one way or the other, not much public interest in the prolonged discussions at the Consulta; just a lethargic iteration of the belief that sooner or later war must come with its terrible risks, its dubious victories. Given the Italian temperament and the nearness of the brink toward which the country was drifting, one looked for flashes of fire. But Rome, if more normal in its daily life than Naples in spite of the absence of those tourists who gather here at this season by the tens of thousands, was equally acquiescent and on the surface uninterested in the event.

The explanation of this outward apathy in the public is simple: nobody knew anything definite enough as yet to rouse passions. The Italian newspaper is probably the emptiest receptacle of news published anywhere. The journals are all personal "organs," and anybody can know whose "views" they are voicing. There was the "Messagero," subsidized by the French and the English embassies, which emitted cheerful pro-Ally paragraphs of gossip. There was the "Vittorio," founded by the German party, patently the mouthpiece of Teutonic diplomacy. There was the "Giornale d' Italia" that spoke for the Vatican, and the "Idea Nazionale" which voiced radical young Italy. And so on down the list. But there was a perfectly applied censorship

which suppressed all diplomatic leaks. So one read with perfect confidence that Prince von Bülow had driven to the Consulta at eleven-fifteen yesterday, and having been closeted with Baron Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Minister, or with the Premier, Signor Salandra, or with both, for forty-seven minutes, had emerged upon the street smiling. And shortly after this event Baron Macchio, the Austrian Envoy, arrived at the Consulta in his motor-car and had spent within the mystery of the Foreign Office twenty or more minutes. The reader might insert any fatal interpretation he liked between the lines of this chronicle. That was quite all the reality the Roman public, the people of Italy, had to speculate upon during weeks of waiting, and for the most part they waited quietly, patiently. For whatever the American prejudice against the dangers of secret diplomacy may be, the European, especially the Italian, idea is that all grave negotiations should be conducted privately — that the diplomatic cake should be composed by experts in retirement until it is ready for the baking. And the European public is well trained in controlling its curiosities.

It was sufficiently astonishing to the American onlooker, however, accustomed to flaming extras and the plethoric discussion in public of the most intimate affairs, state and personal, to witness the acquiescence of emotional Italians in this complete obscurity about their fate and that of

their children and their nation, which was being sorted behind the closed doors of the Consulta. Every one seemed to go about his personal business with an apparent calm, a shrug of expressive shoulders at the most, signifying belief in the sureness of war — soon. There was little animation in the cafés, practically none on the streets. Arragno's, usually buzzing with political prophecy, had a depressing, provincial calm. Unoccupied deputies sat in gloomy silence over their thin *consommations*. Even the 1st of May passed without that demonstration by the Socialists against war so widely expected. To be sure, the Government had prudently packed Rome and the northern cities with troops: soldiers were lurking in every old courtyard, up all the narrow alleys, waiting for some hardy Socialist to "demonstrate." But it was not the plentiful troops, not even a lively thunderstorm that swept Rome all the afternoon, which discouraged the Socialists: they too were in doubt and apathy. They were hesitating, passing resolutions, defining themselves into fine segments of political opinion — and waiting for Somebody to act! They too awaited the completion of those endless discussions among the diplomats at the Consulta, at the Ballplatz in Vienna, and wherever diplomacy is made in Berlin. The first of May came and went, and the *carabinieri*, the secret police, the infantry, the cavalry with their fierce hairy helmets filed off to their barracks in a dripping dusk,

dispirited, as if disappointed themselves that nothing definite, even violence, had yet come out of the business. So one caught a belated cab and scurried through the deserted streets to an empty hotel on the Pincian, more than half convinced that the Government meant really to do nothing except "negotiate" until the spirit of war had died from the hearts of the people.

Yet much was going on beneath the surface. There were flashes to be seen in broad daylight. The King and his ministers at the eleventh hour decided not to attend the ceremonies at Quarto of the unveiling of the monument to the Garibaldian "Thousand." Now, what could that mean? Did it indicate that the King was not yet ready to choose his road and feared to compromise himself by appearing in company with the Francophile poet D' Annunzio, who was to give the address? It would be a hard matter to explain to Berlin, to whose nostrils the poet was anathema. Or did it mean literally that the negotiations with reluctant Austria had reached that acute point which might not permit the absence of authority from Rome even for twenty-four hours? The drifting, if it were drifting, was more rapid, day by day.

There was a constant troop movement all over Italy, which could not be disguised from anybody who went to a railroad station. Italy was not "mobilizing," but that term in this year of war has come to have a diplomatic insignificance.

Every one knew that a large army had already gone north toward the disputed frontier. More soldiers were going every day, and more men of the younger sort were silently disappearing from their ordinary occupations, as the way is in conscript countries. It was all being done admirably, swiftly, quietly — no placards. The *carabinieri* went from house to house and delivered verbal orders. But all this might be a mere "preparation," an argument that could not be used diplomatically at the Consulta, yet of vital force.

There was the sudden twenty-four-hour visit of the Italian Ambassador at Paris to Rome. Why had he taken that long journey home for such a brief visit, consumed in conferences with the ministers? And Prince von Bülow had rallied to his assistance the Catholic Deputy Erzburger. Rome was seething with rumor.

* * *

The remarkable passivity of the Italian public during these anxious moments was due in good part, no doubt, to its thorough confidence in the men who were directing the state, specifically in the Prime Minister Salandra and his Minister of Foreign Affairs Baron Sonnino, who were the Government. They were honest, — that everybody admitted, — and they were experienced. In less troubled times the nation might prefer the popular politician Giolitti, who had a large majority of the deputies in the Parliament in his party,

and who had presented Italy a couple of years earlier with its newest plaything, Libya, — and concealed the bills. But Giolitti had prudently retired to his little Piedmont home in Cavour. All the winter he had kept out of Rome, leaving the Salandra Government to work out a solution of the knotty tangle in which he had helped to involve his country. Nobody knew precisely what Giolitti's views were, but it was generally accepted that he preserved the tradition of the Crispi statesmanship, which had made the abortion of the Triple Alliance. If he could not openly champion an active fulfillment of the alliance, at least he was avowedly *neutralista*, the best that Berlin and Vienna had come to hope from their southern ally. He was the great unknown factor politically, with his majority in the Chamber, his personal prestige. A clever American, long resident in Rome in sufficient intimacy with the political powers to make his words significant, told me, — "The country does not know what it wants. But Giolitti will tell them. When he comes we shall know whether there will be war!" That was May 9 — a Sunday. Giolitti arrived in Rome the same week — and we knew, but not as the political prophet thought. . . .

Meanwhile, there were mutterings of the thunder to come out of this stagnant hesitation. One day I went out to the little town of Genzano in the Alban Hills, with an Italian mother who wished to see her son in garrison there. The regi-

ment of Sardinian *Granatieri*, ordinarily stationed near the King in Rome, had been sent to this dirty little hill town to keep order. The populace were so threatening in their attitude that the soldiers were confined in their quarters to prevent street rows. We could see their heads at the windows of the old houses and convents where they were billeted, like schoolboys in durance vile. I read the word "*Socilismo*" scrawled in chalk over the walls and half-effaced by the hand of authority. The hard faces of the townsfolk scowled at us while we talked with a young captain. The Genzanans were against the war, the officer said, and stoned the soldiers. They did not want another African jaunt, with more taxes and fewer men to till the fields.

Elsewhere one heard that the "populace" generally was opposed to war. "We shall have to shoot up some hundreds of the rats in Florence before the troops leave," the youthful son of a prefect told me. That in the North. As for the South, a shrug of the shoulders expressed the national doubt of Calabria, Sicily, — the weaker, less certain members of the family. Remembering the dire destruction of the earthquake in the Abruzzi, which wrought more ruin to more people than the Messina catastrophe, also the floods that had destroyed crops in the fertile river bottoms a few weeks before, one could understand popular opposition to more dangers and more taxes. These were some of the perplexities that beset the Gov-

ernment. No wonder that the diplomats were weighing their words cautiously at the Consulta, also weighing with extreme fineness the *quid pro quo* they would accept as "compensation" from Austria for upsetting the Balkan situation. It was, indeed, a delicate matter to decide how many of those national aspirations might be sacrificed for the sake of present security without jeopardizing the nation's future. Italy needed the wisdom of patriots if ever in her history.

The Salandra Government kept admirable order during these dangerous days, suppressing the slightest popular movement, pro or con. That was the wise way, until they knew themselves which road to take and had prepared the public mind. And they had plenty of troops to be occupied somehow. The exercise of the firm hand of authority against popular ebullitions is always a marvel to the American. To the European mind government means power, and power is exercised practically, concretely, not by writs of courts and sheriffs, but by armed troops. The Salandra Government had the power, and apparently did not mean to have its hand forced by the populace. . . .

The young officer at Genzano had no doubt that war was coming, nor had the handsome boy whom we at last ran to ground in an old Franciscan convent. He talked eagerly of the "promise" his regiment had received "to go first." His mother's face contracted with a spasm of pain as

he spoke, but like a Latin mother she made no protest. If his country needed him, if war had to be. . . . On our way back to Rome across the Campagna we saw a huge silver fish swimming lazily in the misty blue sky — one of Italy's new dirigibles exercising. There were soldiers everywhere in their new gray linen clothes — tanned, boyish faces, many of them fine large fellows, scooped up from villages and towns all over Italy. The night was broken by the sound of marching feet, for troop movements were usually made at night. The soldiers were going north by the trainload. Each day one saw more of them in the streets, coming and going. Yet Baron Macchio and Prince von Bülow were as busy as ever at the Consulta on the Quirinal Hill, and rumor said that at last they were offering real "compensations."

* * *

The shops of Rome, as those of every city and town in Europe, were hung with war maps, of course. In Rome the prevailing map was that highly colored, imaginative rearrangement of southern Europe to fit the national aspirations. The new frontier ran along the summits of the Alps and took a wide swath down the Adriatic coast. It was a most flattering prospect and lured many loiterers to the shop windows. At the office of the "Giornale d' Italia" in the Corso there was displayed beside an irredentist map an approximate

sketch of what Austria was willing to give, under German persuasion. The discrepancy between the two maps was obvious and vast. On the bulletin boards there were many news items emanating from the "unredeemed" in Trent and Trieste, chronicling riots and the severely repressive measures taken by the Austrian masters. The little piazza in front of the newspaper office was thronged from morning to night, and the old woman in the kiosk beside the door did a large business in maps.

And yet this aspect of the Italian situation seems to me to have been much exaggerated. There was, so far as I could see, no great popular fervor over the disinherited Italians in Austrian lands, in spite of the hectic items about Austrian tyranny appearing daily in the newspapers — no great popular agony of mind over these "unredeemed." Also it was obvious that Italy in her new frontier proposed to include quite as many unredeemed Austrians and other folk as redeemed Italians! No; it was rather a high point of propaganda — as we should say commercially, a good talking proposition. Deeper, it represented the urge of nationalism, which is one of the extraordinary phenomena of this remarkable war. The American, vague in his feeling of nationalism, refuses to take quite seriously agitation for the "unredeemed." Why, he asks with naïveté, go to war for a few thousands of Italians in Trent and Trieste?

I am not attempting to write history. I am guessing like another, seeking causes in a complex state of mind. We shall have to go back. Secret diplomacy may be the inveterate habit of Europe, especially of Italy. The new arrangement with the Allies has never been published, probably never will be. One suspects that it was made, essentially, before Italy had broken with Austria, before, perhaps, she had denounced her old alliance on the 5th of May at Vienna. And yet, although inveterately habituated to the mediævalism of secret international arrangements, Italy is enough filled with the spirit of modern democracy to break any treaty that does not fulfill the will of the people. The Triple Alliance was really doomed at its conception, because it was a trade made by a few politicians and diplomats in secret and never known in its terms to the people who were bound by it. Any strain would break such a bond. The strain was always latent, but it became acute of late years, especially when Austria thwarted Italy's move on Turkey — as Salandra revealed later under the sting of Bethmann-Hollweg's taunts. It was badly strained, virtually broken, when Austria without warning to Italy stabbed at Serbia. Austria made a grave blunder there, in not observing the first term of the Triple Alliance, by which she was bound to take her allies into consultation. The insolence of the Austrian attitude was betrayed in the disregard of this obligation: Italy evidently was too unimportant a

factor to be precise with. Italy might, then and there, the 1st of August, 1914, very well have denounced the Alliance, and perhaps would have done so had she been prepared for the consequences, had the Salandra Government been then at the helm.

There is another coil to the affair, not generally recognized in America. Austria in striking at Serbia was potentially aiming at a closer envelopment of Italy along the Adriatic, provision for which had been made in a special article of the Triple Alliance, — the seventh, — under which she had bound herself to grant compensations to Italy for any disturbance of the Balkan situation. Austria, when she was brought to recognize this commission of fault, — which was not until December, 1914, not seriously until the close of January, 1915, — pretended that her blow at Serbia was chastisement, not occupation. But it is absurd to assume that having chastised the little Balkan state she would leave it free and independent. It is true that in January Austrian troops were no longer in Balkan territory, but that was not due to intention or desire! They had been there, they are there now, and they will be there as long as the Teutonic arms prevail. It is a game of chess: Italy knew the gambit as soon as Austria moved against Serbia. The response she must have known also, but she had not the power to move then. So she insisted pertinaciously on her right under the seventh clause of the Triple

Alliance to open negotiations for "compensations" for Austria's aggression in the Balkans, and finally with the assistance of Berlin compelled the reluctant Emperor to admit her right.

These complexities of international chess, which the American mind never seems able to grasp, are instinctively known by the man in the street in Europe. Every one has learned the gambits: they do not have to be explained, nor their importance demonstrated. The American can profitably study those maps so liberally displayed in shop windows, as I studied them for hours in default of anything better to do in the drifting days of early May. The maps will show at a glance that Italy's northern frontiers are so ingeniously drawn — by her hereditary enemy — that her head is virtually in chancery, as every Italian knows and as the whole world has now realized after four months of patient picking by Italian troops at the outer set of Austrian locks. And there is the Adriatic. When Austria made the frontier, the sea-power question was not as important as it has since become. The east coast of the Adriatic was a wild hinterland that might be left to the rude peoples of Montenegro and Albania. But it has come into the world since then. Add to this that the Italian shore of the Adriatic is notably without good harbors and indefensible, and one has all the elements of the strategic situation. All fears would be superfluous if Austria, the old bully at the north, would

keep quiet: the Triple Alliance served well enough for over thirty years. But would Austria play fair with an unsympathetic ally that she had not taken into her confidence when she determined to violate the first term of the Triple Alliance?

All this may now be pondered in the "Green Book," more briefly and cogently in the admirable statement which Italy made to the Powers when she declared war on Austria. That the Italian Government was not only within its treaty rights in demanding those "compensations" from Austria, but would have been craven to pass the incident of the attack on Serbia without notice, seems to me clear. That it was a real necessity, not a mere trading question, for Italy to secure a stronger frontier and control of the Adriatic, seems to me equally obvious. These, I take it, were the vital considerations, not the situation of the "unredeemed" Italians in Trent and Trieste. But Austria, in that grudging maximum of concession which she finally offered to Italy's minimum of demand, insisted upon taking the sentimental or knavish view of the Italian attitude: she would yield the more Italianated parts of the territory in dispute, not the vitally strategic places. Nor would she deliver her concessions until after the conclusion of the war—if ever!—after she had got what use there was from the Italians enrolled in her armies fighting Russia. For Vienna to regard the tender principle of nationalism is a good enough joke, as we say. Her per-

sistence in considering Italy's demands as either greed or sentiment is proof of Teutonic lack of imagination. The Italians are sentimental, but they are even more practical. It was not the woes of the "unredeemed" that led the Salandra Government to reject the final offering of Austria, and to accept the risks of war instead. It was rather the very practical consideration of that indefensible frontier, which Austria stubbornly refused to make safe for Italy—after she had given cause, by her attack upon Serbia, to render all her neighbors uneasy in their minds for their safety.

So much for the sentimental and the strategical threads in the Consulta negotiations. It was neither for sentiment nor for strategical advantage solely that Italy finally entered the war. Nevertheless, if the German Powers had frankly and freely from the start recognized Italy's position, and surrendered to her *immediate* possession —as they were ready to do at the last moment— sufficient of those national aspirations to safeguard national security, with hands off in the Adriatic, Italy most probably would have preferred to remain neutral. I cannot believe that Salandra or the King really wanted war. They were sincerely struggling to keep their nation out of the European melting-pot as long as they could. But they were both shrewd and patriotic enough not to content themselves with present security at the price of ultimate danger. And if they had been as weak as the King of Greece, as subservi-

ent as the King of Bulgaria, they would have had to reckon with a very different people from the Bulgars and the Greeks — a nation that might quite conceivably have turned Italy into a republic and ranged her beside her Latin sister on the north in the world struggle. The path of peace was in no way the path of prudence for the House of Savoy.

* * *

Lack of imagination is surely one of the prominent characteristics of the modern German, at least in statecraft. Imagination applied to the practical matters of daily living is nothing more than the ability to project one's own personality beneath the skin of another, to look around at the world through that other person's eyes and to realize what values the world holds for him. The Prince von Bülow, able diplomat though they call him, could not look upon the world through Italian eyes in spite of his Italian wife, his long residence in Rome, his professed love for Italy. It must have been with his consent if not by his suggestion that Erzburger, the leader of the Catholic party in the Reichstag, was sent to Rome at this critical juncture. The German mind probably said, — "Here is a notable Catholic, political leader of German Catholics, and so he must be especially agreeable to Italians, who, as all the world knows, are Catholics." The reasoning of a stupid child! Outwardly Italy is Catholic,

but modern Italy has shown herself very restive at any papal meddling in national affairs. To have an alien — one of the "*barbari*" — seat himself at the Vatican and try to use the papal power in determining the policy of the nation in a matter of such magnitude, was a fatal blunder of tactless diplomacy. Nor could Herr Erzburger's presence at the Vatican these tense days be kept secret from the curious journalists, who lived on such meager items of news. No more tactful was it for Prince von Bülow to meet the Italian politician Giolitti at the Palace Hotel on the Pincian. There is no harm in one gentleman's meeting another in the rooms of a public hotel so respectable as the Palace, but when the two are playing the international chess game and one is regarded as an enemy and the other as a possible traitor, the popular mind is likely to take a heated and prejudiced view of the small incident. Less obvious to the public, but none the less untactful, was the manner in which the German Ambassador tried to use his social connection in Rome, his family relationships in the aristocracy of Italy, to influence the King and his ministers. He might have taken warning from the royal speech attributed to the Queen Mother in reply to the Kaiser: "The House of Savoy rules one at a time." He should have kept away from the back stairs. He should have known Italy well enough to realize that the elements of Roman society with which he was affiliated do not represent either power or public opin-

ion in Italy any more than good society does in most modern states. Roman aristocracy, like all aristocracies, whether of blood or of money, is international in its sympathies, skeptic in its soul. And its influence, in a decisive question of life and death to the nation, is nil. The Prince von Bülow was wasting his time with people who could not decide anything. As Salandra said, with dignified restraint in answer to the vulgar attack upon him made by the German Chancellor, — "The Prince was a sincere lover of Italy, but he was ill-advised by persons who no longer had any weight in the nation" — as his colleague in London seems to have been ill-advised when he assured his master that Englishmen would not fight under any circumstances! The trouble with diplomacy would seem to be that its ranks are still recruited from "the upper classes," whose gifts are social and whose sympathies reflect the views and the prejudices of a very small element in the state. Good society in Rome was still out on the Pincian for the afternoon promenade, was still exchanging calls and dinners these golden spring days, but its views and sympathies could not count in the enormous complex of beliefs and emotions that make the mind of a nation in a crisis. Prince von Bülow's motor was busily running about the narrow streets of old Rome, the gates of the pretty Villa Malta were hospitably open, — guarded by *carabinieri*, — but if the German Ambassador had put on an old coat and

strolled through the Trastevere, or had sat at a little marble-topped table in some obscure café, or had traveled second or third class between Rome and Naples, he might have heard things that would have brought the negotiations at the Consulta to an abrupter close one way or the other. For Italy was making up its mind against his master.

* * *

Rome was very still these hesitant days of early May, Rome was very beautiful — I have never known her so beautiful! The Pincian, in spite of its afternoon parade, had the sad air of forced retirement of some well-to-do family. The Piazza di Spagna basked in its wonted flood of sunshine with a curious Sabbatical calm. A stray *forestieri* might occasionally cross its blazing pavements and dive into Piale's or Cook's, and a few flower girls brought their irises and big white roses to the steps, more from habit than for profit surely. The Forum was like a wild, empty garden, and the Palatine, a melancholy waste of fragments of the past where an old Garibaldian guard slunk after the stranger, out of lonesomeness, babbling strangely of that other war in which he had part and mixing his memories with the tags of history he had been taught to recite anent the Roman monuments. As I wandered there in the drowse of bees among the spring blossoms and looked out upon the silent field that once was the heart of

Rome, it was hard to realize that again on this richly human soil of Italy the fate of its people was to be tested in the agony of a merciless war, that even now the die was being cast less than a mile away across the roofs. The soil of Rome is the most deeply laden in the world with human memories, which somehow exhale a subtle fragrance that even the most casual stranger cannot escape, that condition the children of the soil. The roots of the modern Italian run far down into the mould of ancient things: his distant ancestors have done much of his political thinking for him, have established in his soul the conditions of his present dilemma. . . . I wonder if Prince von Bülow ever spent a meditative hour looking down on the fragments of the Forum from the ilex of the Palatine, over the steep ascent of the Capitoline that leads to the Campidolgio, as far as the grandiose marble pile that fronts the newer city? Probably not.

* * *

Germany wanted her place in the sun. She had always wanted it from the day, two thousand years and more ago, when the first Teuton tribes came over the Alpine barrier and spread through the sun-kissed fields of northern Italy. The Italian knows that in his blood. There are two ways in which to deal with this German lust of another's lands — to kill the invader or to absorb him. Italy has tried both. It takes a long time to

absorb a race, — hundreds of years, — and precious sacrifices must be made in the process. No wonder that Italy does not wish to become Germany's place in the sun! Nor to swallow the modern German.

When the Teuton first crossed the Alpine barrier and poured himself lustfully out over the fertile plains of northern Italy, it was literally a place in the sun which he coveted. In the ages since then his lust has changed its form: now it is economic privilege that he seeks for his people. In order to maintain that level of industrial superiority, of material prosperity, to which he has raised himself, he must "expand" in trade and influence. He must have more markets to exploit and always more. It is the same lust with a new name. "Thou shalt not covet" surely was written for nations as well as for individuals. But our modern economic theory, the modern Teutonic state, is based on the belief: "Thou shalt covet, and the race that covets most and by power gets most, that race shall survive!" And here is the central knot of the whole dark tangle. The German coveting greater economic opportunities, knowing himself strong to survive, believes in his divine right to possess. It is conscious Darwinism — the survival of the fittest, materially, which he is applying to the world — Darwinism accelerated by an intelligent will. And the non-Germanic world — the Latin world, for it *is* a Latin world in varying degrees of saturation outside of Ger-

many — rejects the theory and the practice with loathing — when it sees what it means.

* * *

What makes for the happiness of a nation? I asked myself in the mellow silence of ancient Rome. Is it true that economic conquest makes for strength, happiness, survival for the nation or for the individual?

This Italy has always been poor, at least within modern memory — a literal, actual poverty when often there has not been enough to eat in the family pot to go around. She has had a difficult time in the economic race for bread and butter for her children. There is neither sufficient land easily cultivable nor manufacturing resources to make her rich, to support her growing population according to the modern standards of comfort. The Germans despise the Italians for their little having.

Yet the Italian peasant — man, woman, or child — is a strong human being, inured to meager living and hardship, loving the soil from which he digs his living with an intense, fiery love. And poverty has not killed the joy of living in the Italian. Far from it! In spite of the exceedingly laborious lives which the majority lead, the privations in food, clothing, housing, the narrowness, — in the modern view, — of their lives, no one could consider the Italian people unhappy. Their characters, like their hillside farms, are the

result of an intensive cultivation — of making the most out of very little naturally given.

A healthy, high-tempered, vital people these, not to be despised in the *kaiserliche* fashion even as soldiers. Surely not as human beings, as a human society. And their poverty has had much influence in making the Italians the sturdy people they are to-day. Poverty has some depressing aspects, but in the main her very lack of economic opportunity — the want of coal and factories and other sources of wealth — has kept most of these people close to the soil, where one feels the majority of any healthy, enduring race should be. Poverty has made the Italians hard, content with little, and able to wring the most out of that little. It has cultivated them intensively as a people, just as they have been forced to cultivate their rock-bound fields foot by foot.

There are qualities in human living more precious than prosperity, and in these Italians have shared abundantly — beauty, sentiment, tradition, all that give color and meaning to life. These are the treasures of Latin civilization in behalf of which the allied nations of Europe are now fighting. . . .

* * *

I am well enough aware that all this is contrary to the premises of the economic and social polity that controls modern statecraft. I know that our great nations, notably Germany, are based on

exactly the opposite premise — that the strength of a state depends on the economic development of its people, on its wealth-producing power. Germany has been the most convinced, the most conscious, the most relentless exponent of the pernicious belief that the ultimate welfare of the state depends primarily on the wealth-getting power of its citizens. She has exalted an economic theory into a religion of nationality with mystical appeals. She has taught her children to go singing into the jaws of death in order that the Fatherland may extend her markets and thus enrich her citizens at the expense of the citizens of other states, who are her inferiors in the science of slaughter. A queer religion, and all the more abhorrent when dressed out with the phrases of Christianity!

All modern states are more or less tainted with the same delusion — ourselves most, perhaps, after Germany. "We have all sinned," as an eminent Frenchman said, "your people and mine, as well as England and Germany." It is time to revise some of the fundamental assumptions of political philosophers and statesmen. Let us admit that peoples may be strong and happy and contented without seeking to control increasingly those sources of wealth still left undeveloped on the earth's surface, without cutting one another's throats in an effort for national expansion. The psychology of states cannot be fundamentally different from that of the individuals in them.

And the happiness of the individual has never been found to consist wholly, even largely, in his economic prosperity.

Because the Latin soul divines this axiomatic belief, because the Latin world admits a larger, finer interpretation of life than economic success, all civilization waits upon the great decision of this war.

* * *

Suddenly in the calm of these drifting, hesitant days, when nobody knew what the nation desired, there came a bolt of lightning. I have said that the German people lack imagination by which to understand the world outside themselves. They do not coördinate their activities. Otherwise, why commit the barbarism of sinking the Lusitania, just at the moment when they were straining to keep Italy from breaking completely the frayed bonds of the Triple Alliance? Probably it never entered any German head in the "high commandment" that the prosecution of his undersea warfare might have a very real connection with the Italian situation. He could not credit any nation with such "soft sentimentality," as he calls it. Yet I am not alone in ascribing a large significance to the sinking of the Lusitania in Italy's decision to make war. Every observer of these events whom I have talked with or whose report I have read gives the same testimony, that Italy first woke to her own mind at the shock of the Lusitania murders. . . .

ITALY HESITATES

The news came to me in my peaceful room above the Barberini Gardens. The fountain was softly dripping below, the spring air was full of the song of birds as another perfect day opened. The warm sunshine reached lovingly up the yellowed walls of the old palace opposite. All the little, old, familiar things of a long past, which pull so strongly here in Rome at the human heart, were moving in the new day. The life of men, so troubled, so sad, seemed beautiful this May morning, with the suave beauty of ideals that for centuries have coursed through the blood of Italy. . . . Luigi, the black-haired, black-eyed lad who brought the morning coffee and newspapers, was telling me of the horrid crime. With his outstretched fist clenched and shaking with rage he said the words, then, dropping the paper with its heavy headlines, cursed it as if it too symbolically represented the hideous thing that Germany had become. "Now," he cried, "there'll be war! We shall fight them, the swine!" A few days afterward Luigi departed to fight the "swine" on some Alpine pass.

Luigi's reaction to the sinking of the Lusitania was typical of all Rome, all Italy. The same burst of execration and horror was in every mouth. "Fuori i Barbari" was the title of a little anti-German sheet that was appearing in Rome: it got a new significance as it hung in the kiosks or was scanned by scowling men. It became the muttered cry of the street. I am not simple

enough to believe that the sinking of the Lusitania of itself "drove Italy into the war." Nations no more than individuals, alas, are idealistic enough to sacrifice themselves simply for their moral resentments. But this fresh example of cynical indifference to the opinion of civilization, just at the critical point of decision for the Italian people, had much to do with the rousing of that war fury without which no government can push a nation into war. First there must be the spirit of hate, a personal emotion in the hearts of many. It must be remembered also that Italy had felt with the entire civilized world the outrage of Belgium. It has even been rumored that one of the hard passages between Italy and her German allies was the condition that Germany wished to attach to any Austrian concessions, by which Italy at the peace conference should uphold Germany's "claims" to Belgium. No one knows the truth about this, but if true it is in itself an adequate explanation of the failure of the negotiations. And now the Lusitania came with a fresh shock as an iterated example of German state policy. It proclaimed glaringly to the eyes of all men what the Teutonic thing is, what it means to the world. The Latin has been cruel and bloody in his deeds, like all men, but he has never made a cult of inhumanity, never justified it as a principle of statecraft. Italians, prone to hate as to love, prone especially to hate the Teuton, those aliens who have lusted after their richness and beauty

all these centuries, felt the Lusitania murders to the depths of their souls. It was like a red writing on the wall, serving notice that in due season Germany and Austria would tear Italy limb from limb because of her "treachery" in not abetting them in their attack upon the peace of the world.

Prince von Bülow and Baron Macchio might as well have discontinued their daily visits to the Consulta after the 7th of May. Whatever they might have hoped to accomplish with their diplomacy to keep Italy neutral had been irretrievably ruined by the diplomacy of Grand Admiral von Tirpitz. The smallest match, the scratch of a boot-heel on stone, can set off a powder magazine. The Lusitania was a goodly sized match. If the King and his ministers were waiting for the country to declare itself, if they wanted the excuse of national emotion before taking the final irrevocable steps into war, they had their desire. From the hour when the news of the sinking of the Lusitania came over the wires, Italy began to mutter and shout. The months of hesitation were ended. There were elements enough of hate, and Germany had given them all focus. "Fuori i Barbari!" I bought a sheet from the old woman who went hurrying up the street shouting hoarsely,—"Fuori i Barbari!" . . . "Fuori i Barbari!" . . . "Barbari!" . . .

II

The Politician Speaks

GIOVANNI GIOLITTI came to Rome, a few days after the Lusitania affair. Ostensibly he had come to town from his home in little Cavour, where he had been in retirement all the winter, to visit a sick wife at Frascati. Montecitorio, home of politicians, began to hum. Rome quivering with the emotions of its great decision muttered. What did Giolitti's presence at this eleventh hour signify? Remember what the shrewd American observer had said the week before, — "Giolitti will tell the Italians what they want."

The master politician, the ex-Premier, the heir to Crispian policies, was received at the railroad station by a few faithful friends, much as Boss Barnes or Boss Penrose, returning from a voluntary exile in New York or Pennsylvania, might be received by a few of the "boys." They were Deputies from Montecitorio frock-coated and silk-hatted, like politicians all the world over, not a popular throng of a hundred thousand Romans singing and shouting, such as a few days later was to gather in the piazza before the same station to greet the poet, D' Annunzio. It is well to understand the significance of this unobtrusive

coming of the political leader at the moment, to realize what sinister meaning it had for the existing Government, for the Italian nation, for the Allies — for the world.

The Italian Deputies who had been elected two years before, long before even the astutest politician had any suspicion of the black cloud that was to rise over Europe, were Giolittian by a great majority. Giolitti was then the chief figure in Italian politics and controlled the Chamber of Deputies. The Giolitti "machine," as we should say, was the only machine worth mention in Italy. Rumor says that it was buttressed with patronage as American machines are, and, more specifically, that Giolitti when in power had diverted funds which should have gone into national defense to political ends, also had deferred the bills of the Libyan expedition so that at the outbreak of the war Italy found herself badly in debt and with an army in need of everything. Soldiers drilled in the autumn of 1914 in patent leathers or barefooted and dressed as they could, while the Giolittian clubs and interests flourished. Also it was said that the prefects of the provinces, who in the Italian system have large powers, especially in influencing elections, were henchmen of the politician. I do not know how just these accusations may be, nor how true the more serious accusation shortly to be hurled abroad that Giolitti had sold himself for German gold. The latter is easy to say and hard to prove; the former is hard to prove and

easy to believe — it being the way of politicians the world over.

However dull or bright Giolitti's personal honor may have been, the Parliamentary situation was difficult in the extreme — one of those absurd paradoxes of representative government liable to happen any time. Here were five hundred-odd elected representatives of the people owing allegiance, really, not to the King, not to the nation, not to the responsible ministers in charge of the state, but to the politician Giolitti. If they had been elected under the stress of the war, after the 1st of August, 1914, they might not have been the same personal representatives of Giovanni Giolitti. We cannot say. Democracies are prone to be deceived in their chosen representatives: they discover them mortgaged to a leader, secret or open. The Salandra Government knew, of course, Giolitti's prejudices in favor of Italy's old allies, disguised as patriotically *neutralista* sympathies. He had discreetly retired to little Cavour in Piedmont all the winter, maintaining a disinterested aloofness throughout the prolonged negotiations. Yet he knew, the Salandra Government and the King knew, the people knew, that Giovanni Giolitti must be reckoned with before Parliament could be opened to ratify the acts of the ministers, to support them in whatever measures they had prepared to take. It would be simple political insanity to open the Chamber before Giolitti had been dealt

with, leading to acrid discussions, scandal, the inevitable downfall of the ministry, and political chaos. The nation must be united and express itself unitedly by its legal mouthpieces before the world.

* * *

It has been said, I do not know with what truth, that Prince von Bülow had informed the ex-Premier of Austria's ultimate concessions even before they were presented to Salandra and Sonnino, and consequently that Giolitti was precisely aware of the situation when he reached Rome. It is easy to believe almost anything of a diplomacy that dealt with Giolitti in the private rooms of a hotel after the downfall of the Salandra Government. . . . At any rate, Giolitti went through the forms correctly: he called on the Premier Salandra, the Foreign Minister Sonnino, who laid before the ex-Premier the situation as it had shaped itself. Even the King received him in private audience. So much was due to the leading politician of Italy, who controlled, supposedly, a majority of the existing Parliament. In a sense he held the Salandra Government in his hand, after the opening of the Chamber, which could not be long delayed.

Then the politician spoke. Rather, to be precise, he wrote a little note to a faithful intimate, which was meant for the newspapers and got into them at once. It was a very innocent little

note of a few lines in which he confided to "Caro Carlo" his opinion on the tense national situation: better stay with the old allies — the Austrian offers seemed sufficiently satisfactory. This may well have been a sincere, a patriotic judgment, as sincere and patriotic as Bryan's resignation from the American Cabinet a few weeks later. But Italians did not think so. Almost universally they gave it other, sinister interpretations. Giolitti had been "bought," was nothing more than the knavish mouthpiece of German intrigue. Giolitti became overnight *traditore*, the arch-conspirator, the enemy of his country! It must have staggered the politician, this sudden fury which his innocent advice had roused. And, to condemn him, it is not necessary to believe him to have been a knave bought by German gold.

It is important to realize what happened overnight. Giolitti had become the most hated, most denounced man in all Italy, and in so far as he represented honest *neutralista* sentiment the cause was dead. If that was what the Salandra Government wanted to achieve, they had got their desire. If, as the politicians say, they were "feeling out" popular sentiment, they need no longer doubt what it was. Columns of vituperation appeared in the anti-German newspapers, crowds began to form and shout in the streets. "*Traditore*," hissed with every accent of hate and scorn, filled the air. Giolitti's life was seriously in danger — or the Government preferred to think so. The great

apartment house on the Via Cavour in which he lived was cordoned off by double lines of troops. Cavalry kept guard, all day and half the night, before the steps of Santa Maria Maggiore, ready to sweep through the crowded streets in case the mob got out of hand. Other troops poured out of the barracks over the city, doing *piquet a mato* on all the main streets and squares of the city.

Giolitti had, indeed, swayed events, — "told the people what they wanted," — but not in the expected manner. He had revealed the nation to itself, drifting on the verge of war, and they knew now that they wanted nothing of Giolitti or neutrality or German compromises. They wanted war with Austria. The remarkable fact is that a nation which had submitted in passivity to absolute ignorance of the diplomatic exchanges, waiting dumbly the decision that should determine its fate, — of which it could be said that a large number, perhaps a majority, were neutral at heart, — suddenly overnight awoke to a realization of the political situation and rejected the prudent advice of their popular politician, denounced him, and inferentially proclaimed themselves for war. At last they had seen: they saw that the Salandra Government in which they had confidence had come to the parting of the ways with Austria, and they saw the hand of Giolitti trying to play the game of their ancient enemy.

Then the Salandra Government did a bold, a

dramatic thing: it resigned in a body, leaving the King free to choose ministers who could obtain the support of the Giolitti following in Parliament. It was inevitable, it was simple, it was sincere, and it was masterly politics. The public was aghast. At the eleventh hour the state was left thus leaderless because its real desires were to be thwarted by a politician who took his orders from the German Embassy.

Thereupon the "demonstrations" against Giolitti, against Austria and Germany, began in earnest.

* * *

The first popular "demonstration" which I saw in Rome was a harmless enough affair, and for that matter none of them were really serious. The Government always had the situation firmly in hand, with many regiments of infantry, also cavalry, to reinforce the police, the secret service, and the *carabinieri*, who alone might very well have handled all the disorder that occurred. Never, I suspect, was there any more demonstrating than the Government thought wise. The first occasion was a little crowd of boys and youths, — not precisely riff-raff, rather like our own college boys, — and they did less mischief than a few hundred freshmen or sophomores would have done. They marched down the street from the Piazza Tritone, shouting and carrying a couple of banners inscribed with "Abasso Giolitti."

They stoned a few signs, notably the one over the empty office of the Austrian-Lloyd company, then, being turned from the Corso and the Austrian Embassy by the police, they rushed back up the hill to the Salandra residence, to hang about and yell themselves hoarse in the hope of evoking something from the former Premier. The two poles of the following "demonstrations" were the Salandra and the Giolitti residences with occasional futile dashes into the Corso. . . .

For the better part of a week these street excitements kept up, not merely in Rome, but all over Italy: for that one week, while the King sent for various public men and offered them the task of forming a new ministry, which in every case was respectfully declined — as was expected.

* * *

Why did the King not send for Giovanni Giolitti, the one statesman who under ordinary circumstances might have expected a summons? Neither Giolitti nor any of his intimates was invited to form a cabinet and reëstablish constitutional government. Nothing would appear to be more natural than that the leader of the Opposition, controlling a majority of the Deputies, who avowedly represented a policy opposed to that of the ministers who had resigned, should be asked himself to take charge. But Giolitti was never asked, and daily the shouting in the streets grew louder, more menacing, and the mood of the pub-

lic more tense. Nothing was plainer than that if Giolitti had a majority of the Deputies, the people were not for him and his policies. The House of Savoy, as the King so well put it, rules by expressing the will of the people. Each day it was more evident what that will was. Giolitti, the master politician, was being outplayed by mere honest men. They had used him — as Germany had used him — to try out the temper of the nation. With him they drew the *neutralista* and pro-German fire beforehand, prudently, not to be defeated by hostile party criticism in the Chamber. And when they got through with the politician, they threw him out: literally they intimated through the Minister of Public Safety that they would not be responsible any longer for his personal safety. There was nothing for him but to go — before Parliament had assembled!

As Italy seethed and boiled, threatening to break into revolutionary violence, while the King received one respectable nonentity after another, who each time after a very brief consideration declined the proffered responsibility, Giolitti must have thought that the life of the politician is not an easy one. He was stoned when he appeared on the streets in his motor. He had to sneak out of the city at dawn that last day. Where was all the *neutralista* sentiment so evident the first months of the war? And where was the German influence supposed to be so strong in the upper commercial classes? Germans as well as Austrians

were scurrying out of Italy as fast as they could. Their insinuating multiplicity was proved by the numbers of shuttered shops. More hotels along the Pincian, whose "Swiss" managers found it prudent to retire over the Alps, were closed. Angry crowds swarmed about the Austrian and German consulates, also the embassies when they could get through the cordons of troops on the Piazza Colonna. Noisy Rome these days might very well give rise to pessimistic reflections on the folly of popular government to politicians like Giolitti and the Prince von Bülow, whose obviously prudent policies were thus being upset by the "voice of the piazza" led by a very literary poet! No doubt at this moment they would point to Ferdinand of Bulgaria and the King of Greece as enlightened monarchs who know how to secure their own safety by ignoring the will of their peoples. But the end for Ferdinand and Constantine is not yet.

* * *

The trouble with the politician as with the trained diplomat is that he never goes beneath the surface. He takes appearances for realities. He has often lost that instinct of race which should enable him to understand his own humanity. To a Giolitti, adept in the trading game of political management, it must seem insane for Italy to plunge into the war against powerful allies, who at just this time were triumphing in West and

East alike—all the more when the sentimental and trading instincts of the populace might be partly satisfied with the concessions so grudgingly wrung from Austria. It was not only rash: it was bad politics!

But what Giolitti and men of his stripe the world over cannot understand is that the people are never as crafty and wise and mean as their politicians. The people are still capable of honest emotions, of heroic desires, of immense sacrifices. They love and hate and loathe with simple hearts. The politician like the popular novelist makes the fatal mistake of underrating his audience. And his audience will leave him in the lurch at the crisis, as Italy left Giolitti. Italy was never enthusiastic, as its enemies have charged, for a war of mere aggression, for realizing the "aspirations" because Austria was in a tight place, even for redeeming a million and a half more or less of expatriated Italians in Austrian territory. Politicians and statesmen talked of these matters, perforce; the people repeated them. For they were tangible "causes." But what Italians hated was Austrian and German leadership — were the "*barbari*" themselves, their ancient foe; and when told that they had better continue to make their bed with the "*barbari*," they revolted.

There are many men in every nation, — some of the politician type, some of the aristocratic type, some of the business type, — who by interest and temperament are timid and fundamentally

cynical. They are pacifists for profit. About them gather the uncourageous "intellectuals," who believe in the potency of all established and dominating power whatever it may be. But these "leading citizens" fortunately are a minority in any democracy. They do most of the negotiating, much of the talking, but when the crisis comes, — and the issue is out in the open for every one to see, — they have to reckon with the instinctive majority, whose emotional nature has not been dwarfed. That majority is not necessarily the "rabble," the irresponsible and ignorant mob of the piazza as the German Chancellor sees them: it is the great human army of "little people," normal, simple, for the most part honest, whose selfish stake in the community is not large enough to stifle their deepest instincts. In them, I believe, lies the real idealism of any nation, also its plain virtues and its abiding strength.

The Italian situation was a difficult one, obviously. Public opinion had been perplexed. There were the classes I have just mentioned, by interest and temperament either pro-German or honestly neutral. There was the radical mob that the year before had temporarily turned Italy into republics. There was the unreliable South. And the hard-ground peasants who feared, justly, heavier taxes and the further hardships of war. And there were the millions of honest but undecided Italians who hated Teutonism and all its deeds, who were intelligent enough to realize the exposed situation

of Italy, who felt the call of blood for the "unredeemed," and the vaguer but none the less powerful call of civilization from their northern kin — above all who responded to the fervid historical idealism of the poet voicing the longing of their souls to become once more the mighty nation they had been. These were the people whose change of hearts and minds surprised Giolitti and the Germans.

What had been going on in those hearts of the plain people all these months of the great war, Giolitti could not understand. It was another Italy from the one he had charmed that rose at his prudent advice and threw the bitter word "*traditore*" in his teeth and howled him out of Rome. Traitor, yes! traitor to the loftier, bolder, finer longings of their hearts to take their stand at all cost with their natural allies in this last titanic struggle with the barbarians. It was this sort of public that spoke in the piazza and whose voice prevailed.

* * *

The diplomat deals too exclusively with conventional persons, with the sophisticated. The politician deals too exclusively with the successful, with the commercial and exploiting classes. Giolitti's associations were of this class. Like any other *bourgeoisie* of finance and trade, "big business" in Italy was on the side of the big German battalions, who at this juncture were winning

victories. Italy was peculiarly under the influence of German and Austrian finance. One of its leading lending banks — the Banca Commerciale — was a German concern. Most of its newer developments had been accomplished with German capital, were run by German engineers, equipped with German machines. Germany has bitterly reproached her former ally for the "ingratitude" of siding against the people who had brought her prosperity. Gratitude and ingratitude in business transactions are meaningless terms. The lender gets his profit as well as the borrower, usually before the borrower. If Italy has needed German capital, Germany has needed the Italian markets and Italian industries for her capital. The Germans surely have used Italy as their commercial colony. Italy bought her bathtubs, her electric machines, her coal, and her engines from Germany. For the past generation the German commercial traveler has been as common in Italy as the German tourist. In fact, was there ever a German tourist who was not in some sense a commercial agent for the Fatherland?

To the international financier all this is simply intelligible — a matter of mutually desirable exchange. No debtor nation should feel aggrieved with a creditor nation: rather it should rejoice that it has attracted the services of foreign capital. Is the international economist right in his reasoning? Why does the delusion persist among plain people that the creditor is not always a

benefactor? It is a very old and persistent delusion, so strong in the Middle Ages that interest was considered illegal and the despised Jews were the only people who dared finance the world. Abstractly the economists are undoubtedly right, yet I am fain to believe that the popular notion has some ground of truth in it too. Obviously, according to modern notions a country rich in natural resources, but poor in capital, inherited savings, must borrow money to "develop" itself. But granting for the moment that material exploitation of a country is as desirable as our modern notions assume it to be, even then there are reasons for grave suspicion of foreign lenders. Take abused Mexico. Its woes are in good part traceable to the pernicious influence upon its domestic politics of the foreign capital which its riches have attracted. One might instance the United States as an example of beneficial exploitation by foreign capital, but with us it must be remembered the lender has had neither industrial nor political power. We have always been strong enough to manage our affairs ourselves and satisfy our creditors with their interest — if need be with their principal. We have drawn on the European horde as upon an international bank, but we have absolutely controlled the disposition of the moneys borrowed. A weak country can hardly do that. Mexico could not. It had to suffer the foreign exploiter, with his selfish intrigues, in person. Italy has never been as weak as Mexico: it has

maintained its own government, its own civilization. But the increasing amount of foreign investment, the increasing number of foreign "interests" in Italy, has been evident to every Italian. The hotels, the factories, the shops all testify patently to the presence of the stranger within the gates looking after his own interests, breeding his money on Italian soil.

But why not? the dispassionate internationalist may ask. Why should not the Italian hotels be in the hands of Austrians, Germans, and Swiss; the new electrical developments be installed and run by Germans; the shops for tourists and Italians be owned by foreigners? There we cross the unconscious instinct of nationality, which cannot be ignored. Assuming that there is something precious, to be guarded as a chief treasure in the instinct of nationality, as I assume, there are grave dangers in too much friendly commercial "infiltration" from the outside. The indirect influences of commercial exploitation with foreign capital are the insidious, the dangerous ones. The dislike of the foreign trader, the foreign creditor, may voice itself crudely as mere envy, know-nothingism, but it has a healthy root in national self-preservation. For an Italian the German article should be undesirable, especially if its possession means accepting the German and his way of life along with his goods. The small merchant and the peasant express their resentments of foreign competition rawly, no doubt. Consciously

it is half envy of the more efficient stranger. Unconsciously they are voicing the deep traditions of their ancestors, vindicating their race ideals, cherishing what is most enduring in themselves. They would not see their country given over to the stranger, whose life is not their life.

One unpleasant aspect of the commercial invasion of Italy by the Teuton was his liking to live there, and consequently the amount of real estate which he was collecting on the Latin peninsula — so much that the lovely environs of Naples were fast becoming a German principality! These invaders were not traders, nor workers, but capitalists and exploiters. The process is known now as "infiltration." The German had filtered into Italy in every possible way, was supplanting its own native life with the Teutonic thing, as it had in France so largely. Italy could well profit from that experience of its sister nation. The Germans who filtered into French life, commercial, industrial, social, were German first and last. When the crisis came they turned from their adopted land, where they had lived on terms of cordial hospitality for ten, twenty, thirty years, and took themselves back to Germany, in many cases to reappear as the invader at the head of armed troops. The experience of France proved that the peaceful German resident was a German all the years of his life, not a loyal, vital factor in his adopted country — too often something of a spy as well. Therefore Italy might well be dis-

turbed over the presence of so much Teutonic "infiltration" in her own beloved land. And why should Germany call her ungrateful when she sought to rid herself of her unwelcome creditors? German capital had made its five per cent on its investments, and better: it should not expect to absorb the life of the nation also.

* * *

In every debtor nation there must be an element which profits directly from the creditor relation. It assumes, naturally, the aspects of "progress," and consists of the richer trading class and bankers, sustainers of politicians. Such, I take it, were the followers of Giolitti, and such was Giolitti himself, a sincere admirer of Teutonic success and believer in the economic help which Germany could render to his kind of Italian. Such men as Giolitti are easily impressed by evidences of German superiority: they identify progress with the rapid introduction of German plumbing, German hotel-keeping, German electric devices, German banks. All these, they believe, help a "backward country" to come forward. They do not understand the finer spiritual risks that such material benefits may involve. They are not as sensitive as the humble peasant, as simpler citizens, to the gradual sapping of the precious national roots, of the internal debasement that may be going on through the process of "infiltration." They are too prosperous, too cosmo-

politan to feel losses in national individuality. They realize merely the better hotels, the better railways, the improved plumbing in their country. Their souls are already half-Teutonized.

In his dignified answer to the German Chancellor's vulgar attack on him in the Reichstag, Salandra referred to the long history of the Italian people, who "were civilized and leaders of the world" when the Teuton hordes were still savage. It was the spirit of that ancient civilization which did not consist primarily of industrial development that stirred in the souls of true Italians and made them scorn the advice of the Teutonized politician. He was "*traditore*" to all that nobler Italians hold dear — to the Latin tradition.

III

The Poet Speaks

THE poet prophet has so long abdicated his rights among us moderns that we are incredulous when told that he has again exercised his function. That is the reason why the story of a poet's part in leading the Italian people toward their decision is received by Americans with such skeptical humor. And Gabriele d' Annunzio in the rôle! A poet who is popularly supposed to be decadent, if not degenerate, gossipingly known for his celebrated affair with a famous actress, whose novels and plays, when not denounced for their eroticism, are very much caviar to the "wholesome" man, so full are they of a remote symbolism, so purely "literary." "Exotic" is the chosen word for the more tolerant American minds with which to describe the author of "Il Fuoco" and "San Sebastian."

In recent years the Italian poet has abandoned his native land, living in Paris, writing his last work in French, having apparently exiled himself for the rest of his life and renounced his former Italianism. Circumstances were stronger than the poet. The war came, and D'Annunzio turned back to his native land.

* * *

He came to Italy at a critical moment and characteristically he filled the moment with all the drama of which it was capable. His reappearance in Italy, as every one knows, was due to the ceremonies in connection with the unveiling of a monument to the famous Garibaldian band, — the Thousand, — in the little village of Quarto outside of Genoa, from which Garibaldi and his Thousand set forth on their march of liberation fifty-five years ago. The monument had been long in the making. The opportunity for patriotic instigation was heightened by the crisis of the great war. The King and his ministers had indicated, previously, their intention of participating in this national commemoration, but as the day grew near and the political situation became more acute, it was announced that the urgency of public affairs would not permit the Government to leave Rome. It may have been the literal fact that the situation precipitated by the presence of Giolitti demanded their constant watchfulness. Or it may well have been that the King and the Salandra Government had no intention of allowing their hand in this dangerous game to be forced by any reckless fervor of the poet. They were not ready, yet, to countenance his inflammation. At any rate, they left the occasion solely to the poet.

How he improved it may best be gathered from his address. To the American reader, accustomed to a blunter appeal, the famous *Sagra* will seem

singularly uninflammatory — intensely vague and literary. One wonders how it could fire that vast throng which poured out along the Genoa road and filled the little Garibaldian town. But one must remember that nine months of hesitation had prepared Italian minds for the poet's theme — the future of Italy. He linked the present crisis of choice with the heroic memories of that first making of a nation. "*Oggi sta sulla patria un giorno di porpora; e questo é un ritorno per una nova dipartita, o gente d'Italia!*" — A purple day is dawning for the Fatherland and this is a return for a new departure, O people of Italy! The return for the new departure — to make a larger, greater Italy, just as the Thousand had departed from this spot to gather the fragments of a nation into one. "All that you are, all that you have, and yourselves, give it to the flame-bearing Italy!" And in conclusion he invoked in a new beatitude the strong youth of Italy who must bear their country to these new triumphs: "O happy those who have more because they can give more, can burn more. . . . Happy those youths who are famished for glory, because they will be appeased. . . . Happy the pure in heart, happy those who return with victory, because they will see the new face of Rome, the recrowned brow of Dante, the triumphal beauty of Italy."

The youth of Italy avidly seized upon the poet's appeal. The *Sagra* was read in the wineshops of little villages, on the streets of the cities. The

voice of the poet reached to that fount of racial idealism, of patriotism, that glows in the hearts of all real Italians. He tied their heroic past with the heroic opportunity of the present. And he did not speak of the "unredeemed" or of the "aspirations." Instead, "This is a return for a new departure, O people of Italy!"

The politician, awaiting in Rome the effect of his advice to choose the safe path, must have wondered, as too many Americans wondered, how this poet fellow could stir such mad passion by his fine figures of birds and sea! But there was a spirit abroad in Italy that would not be appeased with "compensations": the poet had the following of all "young Italy."

* * *

D'Annunzio came to Rome. Not at once. A whole week elapsed after the *Sagra* at Quarto, the 5th of May, before he reached Rome — a week of growing tumult, of anti-Giolitti demonstrations, in which his glowing words could sink like hot wine into the hearts of the people. The delay was well considered. If the poet had seized the occasion of Quarto, he made his appearance on the larger scene after the interest of the whole nation had been heightened by reading his address.

I was one of the immense throng that awaited the arrival of the train bringing D'Annunzio to the capital. The great bare place before the terminal station was packed with a patient crowd.

The windows of the massive buildings flanking the square were filled with faces. There were faces everywhere, as far as the recesses of the National Museum, around the flamboyant fountain, up the avenues. There were soldiers also, many of them, inside and outside of the station, to prevent any excessive disturbance, part of the remarkable precaution with which the Government was hedging every act. But the soldiers were not needed. The huge throng that waited hour after hour to greet the poet was not rabble: it was a quiet, respectable, orderly concourse of Romans. There was a preponderance of men over women, of youth over middle age, as was natural, but so far as their behavior went, they were as self-contained a "mob" as one might find in Berlin.

The train arrived about dusk, as the great electric lamps began to shine above the sea of white faces. To most the arrival was evident merely from the swaying of the dense human mass, from the cadence of the Garibaldian Hymn that rose into the air from thousands of throats. As room was made for the motor-car, one could see a slight figure, a gray face, swallowed up in the surging mass. Then the crowd broke on the run to follow the motor-car to the hotel on the Pincian where the poet was to stay. The newspapers said there were a hundred and fifty thousand people before the Regina Hotel in the Via Veneto and the adjacent streets. I cannot say. All the way from the

Piazza Tritone to the Borghese Gardens, even to the Villa Malta where Prince von Bülow lived, the crowd packed, in the hope of hearing some words from the poet. The words of Mameli's "L'Inno" rose in the twilight air. At last the little gray figure appeared on the balcony above the throng. . . .

It is impossible to give an adequate idea of the effect of what D'Annunzio said. His words fell like moulded bronze into the stillness, one by one, with an extraordinary distinctness, an intensity that made them vibrate through the mass of humanity. They were filled with historical allusions that any stranger must miss in part, but that touched the fibers of his hearers. He seized, as he had at Quarto, on the triumphant advance of the liberating Thousand and recounted the inspiring incidents of that day fifty years and more ago. As I stood in that huge crowd listening to the poet's words as they fell into the thirsty hearts of the people, — who were weary with too much negotiation, — I realized as never before that speech is given to man for more than reason. The words were not merely beautiful in themselves: they flamed with passion and they touched into flame that something of heroic passion in the hearts of all men which makes them transcend themselves. The crowd sighed as if it saw visions, and there rose instinctively in response the familiar strains of the Garibaldian Hymn.

Italy had found its voice! The poet did not

speak of "compensations," a little more of Trent and Trieste, of a more strategic frontier. He stirred them with visions of their past and their future. He voiced their scorns. "We are not, we will not be a museum, an inn, a picnic ground, an horizon in Prussian blue for international honeymoons! . . . Our genius calls us to put our imprint on the molten matter of the new world. . . . Let there breathe once more in our heaven that air which flames in the prodigious song of Dante in which he describes the flight of the Roman eagle, of your eagle, citizens! . . . Italy is arming, not for the burlesque, but for a serious combat. . . . *Viva, viva Roma*, without shame, *viva* the great and pure Italy!"

That was the voice which called Italy into the war: the will that Italy should live "ever grander, ever purer, without shame." The poet spoke to the Latin in the souls of his hearers.

* * *

He spoke again a number of times. In those feverish days when the nation was in a ferment, the restless youth of Rome would rush in crowds to the hotel on the Pincian and wait there patiently for their poet to counsel them. He gratified their desire, not often, and each time that he spoke he stung them to a fuller consciousness of will. He spoke of the larger Italy to be, and they knew that he did not mean an enlargement of boundaries. He spoke clearly, briefly, intensely. It was

once more the indubitable voice of the poet and prophet raised in the land of great poetry.

D' Annunzio grew bolder. He recognized openly his antagonist — the traitor. The most dramatic of his little speeches was at the Costanzi Theater where a trivial operetta was being given, which was quickly swept into the wings. After the uproar on his entrance had been somewhat stilled, he spoke of Von Bülow and Giolitti and their efforts to thwart the will of the nation.

"This betrayal is inspired, instigated, abetted by a foreigner. It is committed by an Italian statesman, a member of the Italian Parliament in collusion with this foreigner to debase, to enslave, to dishonor Italy." . . . *Traditore!* I never thought to hear the word off the operatic stage. From D' Annunzio's lips it fell like a wave of fire upon that inflammable audience. A grizzled, well-dressed citizen suddenly leaped to his feet, yelling, — "I will drink his blood, the traitor. . . . Death to Giolitti!" . . .

While the big theater rocked and stormed with passion, outside on the Via Viminale barricades were being hastily thrown up. The cavalry, that had been sitting their mounts all day before Santa Maria Maggiore guarding the unwelcome Giolitti from the angry mob, had charged the packed street, sweeping it clear with the ugly sound of horses' hoofs on pavement and cries of hunted men and women. That was the end. The next morning, be it remembered, the politician sneaked

away, and two days afterwards the Salandra Government returned to power. Rome, all Italy, became suddenly calm, purged of its passion, awaiting confidently the reopening of Parliament.

The Government had won. The people had won. The poet had beaten the politician. For his was the voice to which the great mass of his countrymen responded.

* * *

D' Annunzio spoke again admirably at those great gatherings of concord when the citizens of Rome assembled in the Piazza del Popolo and in the Campidolgio. The poet had made himself the spokesman of the new Italy which had found itself in the storm of the past agonizing weeks, and as such he was recognized by the Government. The King and the ministers accorded him audiences; he was given a commission in the army and attached to the general staff. Wherever he appeared he was received with acclamations, with all the honor that is accorded the one who can interpret nobly the soul of a nation. And the poet deserved all the recognition which he received — the throngs, the flowers, the *vivas*, the adoration of Italian youths. For he alone, one might say, raised the crisis from the wallow of sordid bargaining, from the tawdriness of sentiment, to a purer passion of Latin ambition and patriotism. He loftily recalled to his countrymen the finer ideals of their past. He made them feel

themselves Latin, guardians of civilization, not traders for safety and profit.

* * *

Germans, naturally, have had bitter things to say about D' Annunzio. German sympathizers in America as well as the German Chancellor have sneered at the influence wielded in Italy's crisis by a "decadent" poet. Even among American lovers of Italy there has been skepticism of the sincerity of a national mind so easily swayed by a man who "is not nice to women." A peculiarly American view that hardly needs comment!

Is it not wiser to assume that the case of D' Annunzio was really the case of Italy itself—conversion? The deepest passion in the poet's life came to him when, a voluntary exile in France, he witnessed the splendid reawakening of French spirit in face of awful danger. Living in Paris during the early months of the cataclysm, witness of the mobilization, the rape of Belgium, and the turn at the Marne, the heroic struggle for national existence in the winter trenches, he saw with a poet's vision what France was at death-grips with, what the Allies were fighting for, was not territorial gains or glory or even altogether selfish self-preservation, but rather, more deeply, for the existence of a certain humanity. This world war he realized is no local quarrel: it is the greatest of world decisions in the making. And the man himself was transfigured by it; he found

himself in his greatest passion as Italy found herself at her greatest crisis. Latin that he is, he divined the inner meaning of the confused issues presented to the puzzled world. He was fired with the desire to light from his inspiration his own hesitant, confused people, to voice for them the call to the Latin soul that he had heard. For Italy, most Latin of all the heirs of Rome, with her tragic and heroic past, the war must be not a winning of a little Austrian territory, the redeeming of a few lost Italians, but a fight for the world's best tradition against the forces of death. Once more it was "*Fuori i barbari*," as it had been with her Latin ancestors.

It seems to me no great mystery.

In the poet's writing there are passages of a large historical understanding. Of all modern writers he is foremost Latin, in knowledge, in instinct for beauty and form, in love of tradition. Even in his erotic and mystical passages this vein of purest gold may be seen, this understanding of the potential greatness of the tradition into which he was born. What wonder, then, that the first fundamental passion of the mature man's soul should be his desire to proclaim once more the cause of Latin civilization, should be the ardor of fighting in his own manner with his weapon of inspired words the world battle? So it seemed to me as I listened to his voice in the stillness of that May night. The voice of Roman glory, of ancient ideals awoke an answering passion in the

hearts of the thousands who had gathered there. "*Una grande e pura Italia . . . sensa onta.*" And it would be a lasting shame for Italy to keep out of the struggle that the allied nations were making, to take her "compensations" prudently and shrink back within a cowardly neutrality. Better any other fate.

So it seemed to that throng of eager, soul-hungry Italians who stood beneath the balcony of the hotel on the Pincian and drank the poet's fiery message like a full-bodied wine. At last they had found themselves.

IV

The Piazza Speaks

"THE voice of the piazza prevailed," the German Chancellor sneered in his denunciation of Italy at the conclusion. It can easily be imagined, the picture he made to himself, in his ugly northern office on Friedrichstrasse, of the influence that upset all German pressure and sent Italy into the war on the side of the Allies; that defeated the industry of the skilled ambassador, the will of the wily politician. The Chancellor saw one of those large public squares in which Latin countries abound, open centers in their close-built cities, where so much of the common life of the people goes on, now as it has for hundreds of years. For the piazza, descending in direct tradition from the ancient Forum, is the public hall of citizens, where they trade, gossip, quarrel, plot, love, and hate, from the crone sunning herself in a sheltered nook over her bag of chestnuts to the grandee whose palace windows open above the noisy commonalty. The Chancellor saw this common meeting-ground, this glorified street, filled with a ragged mob of "the baser quality," as on the operatic stage, emptily vocal or evilly skulking for mischief, like the *mafia*, the *apache*. He saw this loose gathering of

irresponsibles suddenly stirred to evanescent passion against the real benefactors of their country by the secret agents of the Allies, "corrupted by English gold," in the mechanical melodrama of the German imagination, marching to and fro, attacking the shops and homes of worthy Germans, howling and stoning, by mere noise drowning the sober protests of reflecting citizens, intimidating a weak king, connived at by a bought government, pushing a whole nation into the bloody sacrifice of war out of mere recklessness of rioting — a piazza filled with the rabble minority who have nothing to lose because they neither fight nor pay.

* * *

Such a picture, reflected in Bethmann-Hollweg's splenetic phrase, is a complete delusion of the German mind. I was in Rome and saw the real piazza at work. I was on the streets all hours of day and night, and what I saw was nothing like the trite imaginings of the German Chancellor. As I have said in a previous chapter, the "demonstrations" did not begin in any perceptible form until the bungling hand of Prince von Bülow betrayed his intrigue with Giolitti and the politician's intention of defeating the Salandra Government in its preparations for war became evident. At no time did the rioting in the streets equal the violence of what a third-class strike in an American mill town can produce. Such as it was

the Government showed the determination and ability to keep it strictly within bounds. Rome was filled with troops. Alleyways and courtyards oozed troops at the first shouts from the piazza: the danger points of the Corso, especially the Piazza Colonna on which the Chigi Palace, the residence of the Austrian Ambassador, fronts, were kept almost constantly empty by cordons of troops. All told, the destruction done by the mobs could not have amounted to several hundred dollars — a few signs and shop windows smashed, a few pavements torn up in the Via Viminale. It is true that after war was declared upon Austria there was some pillage of Austrian and German shops in Milan, which has been greatly exaggerated by the German and pro-German press; it was nothing worse than what happened in Berlin to English residents in August, 1914. And the Italian Government immediately took severe measures with the officials who had permitted the disorders — removing the prefect and the military commander of Milan.

There is no saying, of course, what might have happened had the King offered the premiership to Giolitti, and had that astute politician been rash enough to accept the responsibility of forming a government in accord with his own *neutralista* sympathies. It is more than likely that revolution would have ensued: possibly Italy would have entered the war as a republic. For the Italians are not Greeks, as has been amply proved.

But the King of Italy, whatever his own sympathies may have been, showed plainly that he had enough political understanding not to run counter to the expressed will of his people, to deal with the "traitor." After a week of tempestuous interregnum, in which the piazza expressed itself passionately, the Salandra Government returned to power with all which that implied in foreign policy. Then the piazza became quiet. If the piazza must shoulder the responsibility of Italy's decision, it must be credited with knowing marvelously well its own mind.

* * *

The constitution of this "mob" is worth attention. I saw it at many angles. I followed its first erratic flights through the streets when Salandra resigned and a gaping void opened before the nation. I waited for the poet's arrival at the Roman station, for hours, while the dense throng of men and women pressed into the great square and swelled like a dark pool into the adjoining streets. And I followed with the "piazza" in its instinctive rush to the hotel on the Pincian Hill to hear the voice of its spokesman. Again I was in the Corso when the plumed cavalry cleared the surging mass from the Piazza Venezia to the Piazza Colonna. I heard the people yell, "Death to the traitor Giolitti!" and "*Fuori i barbari!*" and sing Mameli's "L' Inno." I saw the uproar melt away in the soft darkness of the Roman

nights, leaving the cavalry at their vigil before Santa Maria Maggiore, guarding the repose of Giovanni Giolitti.

I can testify that the "piazza" was composed very largely of perfectly respectable folk like myself. It varied more or less as chance gatherings of men will vary. Sometimes there were more workingmen in dirty clothes, sometimes more youths and boys with their banners, sometimes more shouters and fewer actors. But the core of it was always that same mass of common citizenship that gathered anciently in the Forum, that to-day goes orderly enough to the polls in New York or Chicago, — plain men, rather young than old, who are so distinctly left on the outside of affairs, who must perforce turn to the newspaper for information and to the open street for expression, who relieve themselves of uncomplex emotions by shouting, and who symbolize the things they hate to the depth of their souls with personalities like Giolitti and occasionally shy bricks at the guarded home of authority. All this, yes, but not "riff-raff," not anarchist, nor *mafia*, nor *apache*. Nothing of that did I see those days and nights.

The greeting to D' Annunzio was made by men of the professional and intellectual classes I should say, having wormed my way in and out of that vast piazza gathering. The daily crowds before the poet's hotel were composed chiefly of youths, at school or college, others in working dress. The

noisiest, most inflammable of all these mobs was that in the Costanzi Theater the evening of D' Annunzio's appearance there. They were citizens — and their wives — who could afford to pay the not inconsiderable price charged — and seats were at a premium. The men around me in evening dress, who were by no means silent, came from the "classes" rather than the masses. The crowds that hung about the Corso and the adjacent squares were more mixed, but they held a goodly proportion of the frequenters of the Café Arragno. The worst that could be said against these casual gatherings was their youth. It is the way of youth to vent its passion in speech, to move and not to stand. Middle age stood on the sidewalks and watched, sympathetically. Old age looked down from the windows, contemplatively. But both old age and middle age consorted with youth in the great meetings of consecration in the Piazza del Popolo and the Campidolgio, after the will of the people had prevailed. And after all, youth must fight the wars, and pay for them for long years afterwards — why should it not have its say in the making of them as well as middle age and old age? The youths in the ranks of the patient, good-natured soldiers who did *piquet a mato* all day and half the night in the Roman streets during that vocal week while the piazza spoke, were openly sympathetic with the mobs they were holding down. I knew some of the gray-clad boys. I strolled along the lines and

saw the smiles, heard the chaffing give-and-take of citizen and soldier as the mob tried to rush through the double ranks that cordoned the streets. There was no hatred there, no violent conflict with authority. Each understood the other. The young officers seemed to say to the crowd, — "You may howl all you like, you fellows, but you must n't throw stones or make a mess. . . . What 's the good! War is coming anyway in a few days — they can't talk it away!" And the crowd replied heartily, — "You are all right. We understand each other. You are doing your duty. Soon you will be doing something better worth while than policing streets and saving that traitor Giolitti's skin from us. You will be chasing the Austrians out of Italian territory, and many of us will be with you then!" And the young officers looked the other way when the members of the "mob" offered the tired soldiers cigarettes and chocolate, and sometimes slipped through the cordon on private business within the forbidden area. Only once, once only in all the excitement did the long-haired horsemen clatter through the streets in a serious charge, scattering the shrieking pedestrians. That was by way of warning, possibly as much to the Government as to the populace.

Then the decision was made, and after the Salandra Ministry, in whom the people had confidence, had returned to power, the ministry that had broken with Austria and refused her grudging

compromises, the piazza purred like doves and listened to long patriotic speeches from "representative citizens." No soldiers were needed to keep order in these immense gatherings. For all were citizens, then, piazza and palace alike in the face of war.

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One easily understands the German Chancellor's scorn over any irregular expression of public opinion, his disgust that the loose public in the streets dares to vent any emotion or will other than that suggested to it by a strong government, above all daring to voice it passionately. In a nation such as Germany, where the franchise is so hedged about that even those who have it cannot effectively express their wills, where political opinion is supplied from a central fount of authority, where the nation goes into war at the command of the Kaiser and his military advisers, where a war of "defense" and all other national interests are controlled by the "high commandment," consisting at the most of forty or fifty men, while the remaining sixty-five millions of the people are obedient puppets, nourished on falsehoods, where the popular emotion can be turned on like an electric current at the order of the "high commandment," — now against this enemy, now against that one, — first hate of English, then hate of Italians, now hate of Americans — it is natural that a high government functionary

should despise all popular effervescence and misread its manifestations as merely the meretricious, bought noise of the mob, quickly roused in the Southern temperament and badly controlled by a weak, and probably corrupt, government. The elements in the piazza have no power in the close organization of Germany, no political expression whatever: all good citizens are instructed by a carefully controlled press how to think and feel and speak. To my thinking it is rather to the glory of the Latin temperament that it cannot be throttled and guided like the more docile Teuton nature, that when it feels vividly it will express itself, and that it can feel vividly, unselfishly in international concerns. The Latin cannot be made to march in blind obedience into the jaws of death. The piazza merely shouted what Italy had come to feel, that Teutonic domination would be intolerable, that at all cost the Austro-German ambitions must be checked, and the Latin tradition vindicated and made to endure. It was proved by the marvelous content, the fervid unanimity of patriotism that spread over Italy, once the great decision had been made.

* * *

Since those full May weeks the world has had an example of what no doubt the Imperial Chancellor considers the suitable method of dealing with popular sentiment. The sympathies of Greeks and Rumanians have been, since the

opening of the war, with the allied nations, yet their Teutonized sovereigns have kept both countries from declaring themselves in favor of the Allies. The King of Greece has stretched the constitution to preserve a distasteful neutrality, which, if it were not for the failure of the Allies to make impressive gains in the first year of the war, would have doubtless cost him his crown. The Balkan States are near enough the actual theater of war to suffer acutely from fear, and a natural timidity worked upon by many German agents, more successfully than Prince von Bülow, has thus far kept the people of Rumania and Greece passive in a false neutrality. Bulgaria is a fine example of the perfect working of the German method. The piazza certainly had no hand in the intrigues of King Ferdinand of Bulgaria. The representatives of his people urged him to maintain at least neutrality, not to put the nation at war with its blood kin, against its best interest. But the thing had all been "arranged" between the German King of Bulgaria and the German Government through "negotiation." Germany had been successful in buying the coöperation of Bulgaria as it tried to buy Italy's neutrality, at the expense of Austria. There were other factors in the case of Bulgaria that worked to the German advantage, but the method is clear. Not the voice of the piazza, but the secret agreement of "responsible government," in other words, the control of despotic, German rulers. Italy may well

be proud that she has a sovereign who faithfully interprets his responsibility of rule in a constitutional state and executes the will of his people — who listens also to the voice of the piazza, not merely to the arguments of the foreign diplomat. And Italy may also be proud that the piazza spoke at a dark hour in the Allies' cause, if not the darkest, when German arms were prevailing in the East; if the dangers of German conquest were not as close to Italy as with the Balkan States, they were not remote, as German threats too plainly showed.

The Venezelos-Zaimis situation was impossible in Italy, though the circumstances were almost parallel, with Salandra and Giolitti. The piazza knew the deep Biblical truth, "He who is not for me is against me," and execrated the professed *neutralista* Giolitti. But the Greeks, it seems, are more easily managed by a "strong" government and a German king. The end, however, is not yet in sight. It remains to be seen whether the path of prudent passivity is the safe one, even selfishly.

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Why, after all, should we feel so apologetic for the voice of the piazza? All popular government, even in the limited form of a constitutional monarchy such as Italy, is a rough, uncertain affair. "The House of Savoy rules by executing the will of the Italian people." Good! But how is that popular will to be determined? Not, surely, by

taking a poll of the five hundred-odd Deputies of the Italian Parliament elected two years before the world was upset by the Teuton desire to rule. Those Deputies were chosen, as we Americans know only too well how, by mean intrigues of party machines, by clever manipulation of trained politicians like Giovanni Giolitti, who by their control of appointed servants — the prefects of the provinces — can throw the elections as they will, can even disfranchise unfriendly elements of the population. Manhood suffrage is not a precise, a scientific method of getting at public opinion. It is possibly the least accurate method of gauging the will of a people. Something other than the poll is needed to resolve the will of a nation. And when that will is determined it makes little odds what instrumentality expresses it. Even the Giolittian Deputies, when brought to the urn for a secret vote on the Salandra measures a week after the lively expression of popular will in the piazza, voted — secretly — against their neutral leader, in favor of war! They had been converted by the voice of the piazza — by other things also in all likelihood. If their votes had been taken ten days before, when Giolitti first arrived in Rome, the result would have been far different: as Salandra and his colleagues knew. In the end the Italian Parliament merely registered the will of the people, both men and women, which expressed itself, as it always must, in diverse ways, through the press, by the voice of

the piazza, in public and private discussion, flightily, weightily, passionately, timidly.

* * *

Will, individual or collective, is a mysterious force. What enters into that act of decision which results in will is never wholly apparent, from the least to the gravest matters. And no scheme of government, which admits the right of the individual citizen, plain and exalted alike, to be heard and obeyed, has discovered a perfect way of polling this collective will of the nation. Our electoral representative method and majority vote is surely rough, though better than the Bulgarian way. That right to vote, for which our women are so eagerly striving, as thinking men realize only too well, is an empty privilege. The will of a people is inaccurately registered, not made, by the vote. The voice of the piazza when deep enough and strong enough is as good as any other way, perhaps, of determining the collective will of a nation in a crisis; surely far better than the secret way of Ferdinand of Bulgaria. Further, the reason of the piazza on any vital fundamental matter, such as war, which means life or death, is as sure as your intelligence or mine, possibly surer, because the piazza, having less to lose or gain, feels and believes and acts more simply, basically. The Roman piazza, the people of Italy, reacted to the crime against Belgium, to the atrocities committed on priests and women and chil-

dren, to the murders of the Lusitania, — all deeds of that ancient enemy whose barbarism had now reappeared, after centuries, under an intellectual and sophisticated mask with a blasphemous perversion of religious sanction. They reacted also, it might be, to their own sense of personal danger from an unprotected frontier dividing them from this unscrupulous enemy, to the wrongs of some thousands of Italians condemned to live under Austrian rule and fight her battles against their friends. They responded also to the glory of Garibaldi's Thousand, who had liberated their fathers from foreign domination and made a nation out of Italy, and they responded to the great past of their people from whom the essential elements of what men know to-day as civilization has spread over the world. All these emotions were hidden in that one cry,—"Out with the barbarians!"

The voice of the piazza, with its simple unanimity, its childlike psychology, came nearer to expressing the soul of Italy than the German Chancellor can comprehend, than any sophisticated diplomat, who has associated only with "thinking" and "leading" people, can believe. The Latin soul of Italy which cursed its politician and thrilled at the words of its poet! That soul of a people which is greater than any individual, which somehow expresses itself more authoritatively through the simple people who must suffer for their faiths than through the intellectuals and the protected members of a society. . . .

"*Viva Italia!*" the tanned conscript leaning from the car window at Subiaco shouted back to his friends and home. And the old men and girls left in the fields raised their hats as the train passed and shouted in reply, — "*Viva Italia!*" It was not English gold, nor the desire for Trent and Trieste, that brought that cry to the boy's lips!

V

Italy Decides

WHATEVER one may think of the piazza voice, whether the disposition is to sneer with the German or to trust with the democrat in its spontaneous expression, it is a matter of history now that Italy's decision had been made before the question came to a vote in the Chamber of Deputies, a fortnight or more before the reluctant ambassadors of the ex-Alliance backed into their waiting trains and departed homeward across the Alps. It is a significant fact of personal psychology that the crisis of a decision takes place before action results to calm the disturbed mind. So it was with Italy. Her decision had really been taken when the Lusitania sank, when the politician, in face of this fresh outrage, advised the safer course of neutrality, which would amount to a connivance with her former associates in their predatory programme. *Traditore!* meant but one thing — a betrayal of the nation's soul. In the light of more recent events, since Italy entered the war, there are probably many Italians who secretly wish that the safer counsel had prevailed, that, like Greece and Rumania, Italy had "preserved a benevolent neutrality" in the great war, even possibly that she had con-

cluded to make her bed in the Teutonic camp. If the world is to be Teutonized, they would argue, why put one's head in the wolf's jaw! There are prudent people of that stripe in every nation, but since the end of May they have kept silence in Italy. And it should be forever remembered to her honor that Italy made her decision in face of Teutonic successes. If the military situation did not look so black for the Allies at the end of May as it does this December, it looked black enough with the crumbling Russian resistance before Mackensen's phalanx. Neuve Chapelle had been a costly and empty victory. There had been no successful drive in Champagne and Artois to encourage those who bet only on winning cards. There were heavy clouds in the east, merely a sad silence along the western wall. It was long past Easter, when England had boastfully expected to open the Dardanelles and the truth was beginning to appear that Constantinople might never be reached by the allied operations in Gallipoli. Italy threw in her lot with the Allies in a dark hour, if not the darkest.

The great decision which had lain in solution in the hearts of the people was evoked by events and made vocal by the flaming words of D'Annunzio, interpreted by a faithful king, who resisted the temptation to dethrone himself by calling Germany's hired man to power, and finally registered by the Deputies at Montecitorio on May 19. It was virtually made, I say, the tumultuous week

that came on the resignation of the Salandra Government. What followed the return of the ministry to power was merely automatic, as peaceful as any day's routine. Parliament was called to meet on Wednesday, the 19th. The Sunday afternoon before, the piazza and the palace and all other elements of Roman citizenship met in a great gathering of content and consecration at the foot of the Pincian Hill in the Piazza del Popolo, again the day after in the Campidolgio above the Forum. How fortunate a people are to have such hallowed places of meeting, steeped in associations of great events!

It was a warm, brilliant, sunny day, that Sunday, and in the afternoon every one in Rome, it seemed, was as near the Piazza del Popolo as he could get. The meeting was addressed by a number of well-known Romans of varied political affiliations. But the high note of all the speeches was a fervid patriotism and harmony. Rome was calm, believing that it had chosen nobly if not wisely. On the Campidolgio, D' Annunzio again sounded the tocsin of the heroic Thousand, and lauded the army which had been belittled by the followers of Giolitti. Already the troops were leaving Rome. . . . Then Parliament opened. The meeting of the Deputies if memorable was short. The square and streets about Montecitorio had been carefully cleared and held empty by cordons of troops. There was to be no shouting, no demonstration within hearing of Parliament.

Long before midday the Chamber was crowded with all the notables who could gain admission. The proceedings were extremely brief, formal. All knew that the die had been cast: what remained was for the army to accomplish. The Premier Salandra made a brief statement summarizing the diplomatic efforts that his Government had undertaken to reach a satisfactory understanding with Austria, the record of which could be followed in the "Green Book," which was then given to the public. He informed the Chamber, what was generally known, that the Triple Alliance had already been denounced on the 5th of May, and he offered a "project of law," which was tantamount to a vote of confidence in the Government and which also gave the King and his ministers power to make war and to govern the country during the period of war without the intervention of Parliament. It thus authorized both the past acts of the Salandra Ministry and its future course. The measure, undebated, was voted on secretly. And it is significant that of more than five hundred Deputies present only seventy-two voted in the negative. Of these seventy-two who voted against the Government, some were out-and-out *neutralistas*, and some few were Socialists who had the courage of their convictions. The great majority of the Giolittians must have voted for war. Had they seen a great light since the piazza raised its voice, since their leader had fallen from his high place? Possibly

they had never been with Giolitti on this vital national question. At least, the fact illustrates how representative government does roughly perform the will of its people when that will is clear enough and passionate enough: the will registers itself even through unwilling instruments.

After the vote had been taken, the Chamber adjourned, and when the following day the Senate ratified, unanimously, the action of the Chamber of Deupties, Parliament was dissolved. Many of the members enlisted and went to the front. Since the end of May Italy has been autocratically governed. The decrees of the King and his ministers are law — an efficient method of governing a country at war, avoiding those legislative intrigues that latterly have threatened the concord of France.

It is noteworthy that the Italian Senate voted unanimously for war. The Senate is not an elective body. It is composed of dignitaries, old, conservative men from the successful classes of the nation, who are not easily swayed by the emotions of the piazza. From this unrepresentative body might have been expected a show of resistance to the Government's measure, if, as Giolitti and the German party asserted, there was a serious sentiment in the country in favor of neutrality which had been howled down by the mobs. It is inconceivable that such a body could have been completely cowed by rioting in the

streets. The unanimous vote of the Italian Senators is sufficient refutation of the Bethmann-Hollweg slur.

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As I crossed the Piazza Colonna the morning Parliament opened, my attention was caught by a small crowd before a billboard. First one, then another passer-by stopped, read something affixed there, and, smiling or laughing, passed on his way. In the center of the board was a small black-bordered sheet of paper, with all the mourning emblems, precisely resembling those mortuary announcements which Latin countries employ. It read: "Giovanni Giolitti, this day taken to himself by the Devil, lamented by his faithful friends"; and there followed a list of noted Giolittians, some of whom even then were voting for war with Austria. A bit of Roman ribaldry, specimen of that ebullition of the piazza disdained by the German Chancellor; nevertheless, it must have bit through the hide of the politician, who for the sake of his safety was not among the Deputies voting at Montecitorio. Later I read in a Paris newspaper that Giolitti was to spend the summer as far away from the disturbance of war as he could get, in the Pyrenees, but it was rumored in Paris that the French Government, having intimated to its new ally that it did not wish to harbor Giolitti, the Italian politician was forced to remain at home. I believe that once since the "Caro Carlo"

letter he has spoken to his countrymen, a patriotic interview in which he announced that he had been converted to the necessity of the war with Austria! Thus even the politician comes to see light. But Giovanni Giolitti, as the black-bordered card said, is dead politically.

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With the votes of Parliament the Roman part in the drama, the civil part, was ended. Rome began to empty fast of soldiers, officers, officials. The scene had shifted to the north, where the hearts of all Italians were centered. There was a singular calm in the city. One other memorable meeting should be recorded, on the Saturday afternoon following the Parliamentary decision. If popular manifestations count for anything, the dense throng in the Campidolgio and later the same afternoon before the Quirinal Palace demonstrated the enthusiasm with which the certainty of war with Austria was accepted.

There are few lovelier spots on earth than the little square of the Campidolgio on the Capitoline Hill and none more laden with memories of a long past. Led by a sure instinct the people of Rome crowded up the steep passages that led to the crest of the hill, by tens of thousands. In this hour of the New Resurrection of Italy, the people sought the hearthstone of ancient Rome on the Capitoline. About the pillars of the Cancelleria, which stands on Roman foundations, up the long flight of steps

leading to the Aracœli, even under the belly of the bronze horse in the center of the square, Italians thrust themselves. Rome was never more beautiful than that afternoon. Little fleecy clouds were floating across the deep blue sky. The vivid green of the cypresses on the slope below were stained with the red and white of blooming roses. In the distance swam the dome of St. Peter's, across the bend of the Tiber, and through the rift between the crowded palaces one might look down upon the peaceful Forum. The birthplace of the nation! Here it was that the people, the decision having been made to play their part in the destiny of the new world now in the making, came to rejoice. The spirit of the throng was entirely festal. And these were the people, workingmen and their wives and mothers from the dark corners of old Rome, neither hoodlums nor aristocracy, the people whose men for the most part were already joining the colors.

The flags of the unredeemed provinces together with the Italian flag were borne through the crowd up the steps of the municipal palace to wave beside Prince Colonna, as he appeared from within the palace. Mayor of Rome, he had that afternoon resigned his position in order to join the army with his sons. Handsome, with a Roman face that reminded one of the portrait busts of his ancestors in the Capitoline Museum close by, he stood silent above the great multitude. The time for oratory had passed. He raised his hands

and shouted with a full voice — "*Viva Italia!*" and was silent. It was as if one of the conscript fathers had returned to his city to pronounce a benediction upon the act of his descendants. The people repeated the cry again and again, then broke into the beautiful words of Mameli's "L' Inno," — "*Fratelli d' Italia.*"

Then the gathering turned to cross the city to the Quirinal, where the King had promised to meet them. The way led past one of the two Austrian embassies in the Piazza Venezia — a danger spot throughout the agitation; but this afternoon the crowd streamed by without swerving, intent on better things. On the Quirinal Hill, between the royal palace and the Consulta, where the diplomatic conferences are held, the people packed in again. The roofs of the neighboring palaces were lined with spectators and every window except those of the royal palace was filled with faces. On the balcony above the palace gate some footmen were arranging a red velvet hanging. Then the royal family stepped out from the room behind. The King, with his little son at his side, stood bareheaded while the crowd cheered. On his other side were the Queen and her two daughters. King Victor, whose face was very grave, bowed repeatedly to the cheering people, but said no word. The little prince stared out into the crowd with serious intensity, as if he already knew that what was being done these days might well cost him his father's throne. The

people cried again and again, — "*Viva Italia, viva il re*"; also more rarely, "*Imperio Romano!*" At the end the King spoke, merely, — "*Viva Italia, mi!*"

Perhaps the presence of the German and the Austrian Ambassadors, who that very hour were at the Consulta vainly trying to arrange a bargain, restrained the King from saying more to his people then. Possibly he felt that the occasion was beyond any words. His face was set and worn. The full passion of the decision had passed through him. His people had desired war, and he had faithfully followed their will. Yet he more than any one in that crowd must know the terrible risk, the awful cost of this war. Those national aspirations for which his country was to strive, — Trent and Trieste, Istraia and the Dalmatian coast, in all a few hundred miles of territory, a few millions of people, — the well informed were saying would cost one hundred and fifty thousand Italian soldiers a month, to pick the locks that Austria had put along her Alpine frontier! No wonder the King of Italy met his people after the great decision in solemn mood.

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The crowd melted from the Quirinal Square in every direction, content. Some stopped to cheer in front of the Ministry of War, which these days and nights was busy as a factory working overtime and night shifts. People were reading the

newspapers, which in default of more vivid news contained copious extracts from the "Libro Verde." Yet the "Green Book" was not even now completed!

The politician had spoken, the poet had said his fiery word to the people, the piazza had hurled its will, Parliament had acted and gone its way, the army staff was hastening north. Yet the Austrian Ambassador and his German colleague had not taken the trains waiting for them outside the Porta Pia with steam up. It was a mystery why they were lingering on in a country on the verge of hostilities, where they were so obviously not wanted any longer. Daily since Parliament had voted they had been at the Consulta — were there now in this solemn hour of understanding between the King and his people! Singly and together they were conferring with Baron Sonnino and the Premier. What were they offering? We know now that at this last moment of the eleventh hour Austria had wakened to the real gravity of the situation, and with Teutonic pertinacity and Teutonic dullness of perception made her first real offer — the immediate cession and occupation of the ceded territories she had set as her maximum, a thing she had refused all along to consider, insisting that the transfer be deferred to the vague settlement time of the "Peace." I do not know that if she had frankly started the negotiations with this essential concession, it would have made any real difference. I think not.

Her maximum was insufficient: it nowhere provided for that defensible frontier, and it was but a meager satisfaction of those other aspirations of nationality which she despised. It still left a good many Italians outside of the national fold, and it still left Italy exposed to whatever strong hand might gain control on the east shores of the Adriatic. At all events, in this last moment of the eleventh hour, if the ambassadors had been authorized to yield all that Baron Sonnino had begun by asking, it would not have kept Italy from the war — now.

Elsewhere I have dealt with the legal and strategic questions involved in the "Green Book." These diplomatic briefs, White or Yellow or Orange or Green, seem more important at the moment than in perspective. They are all we observers have of definite reason to think upon. But nations do not go to war for the reasons assigned in them — nothing is clearer than that. Like the lengthy briefs in some famous law case, they are but the intellectual counters that men use to mask their passions, their instincts, their faiths. According to the briefs both sides should win and neither. And the blanks between the lines of these diplomatic briefs are often more significant than the printed words.

While Baron Macchio and Prince von Bülow, the Ballplatz and Friedrichstrasse, Baron Sonnino and his colleagues were making the substance of the "Green Book," the people of Italy were

deciding the momentous question on their own grounds. The spirit of all Italy was roused. Italian patriotism gave the answer.

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"*Viva Italia!*" the boy conscript shouted, leaning far out of the car window in a last look at the familiar fields and roof of his native village. "*Viva Italia!*" the King of Italy cried, and his people responded with a mighty shout, — "*Viva Italia!*" What do they mean? In the simplest, the most primitive sense they mean literally the earth, the trees, the homes they have always known — the physical body of the mother country. And this primal love of the earth that has borne you and your ancestors seems to me infinitely stronger, more passionate with the European than with the American. We roam: our frontiers are still horizons. . . . But even for the simple peasant lad, joining the colors to fight for his country, patriotism is something more complex than love of native soil. It is love of life as he has known it, its tongue, its customs, its aspects. It is love of the religion he has known, of the black or brown or yellow-haired mother he knows — of the women of his race, of the men of his race, and their kind.

Deeper yet, scarce conscious to the simple instinctive man, patriotism is belief in the tradition that has made you what you are, in the ideal that your ancestors have seeded in you of what

life should be. Therefore, patriotism is the better part of man, his ideal of life woven in with his tissue. Men have always fought for these things, — for their own earth, for their own kind, for their own ideal, — and they will continue to give their blood for them as long as they are men, until wrong and unreason and aggression are effaced from the earth. The pale concept of internationalism, whether a class interest of the worker or an intellectual ideal of total humanity, cannot maintain itself before the passion of patriotism, as this year of fierce war has proved beyond discussion.

Italian patriotism, which in the last analysis Italy evinced in making war against Austria, was composed of all three elements. Italian patriotism is loyalty to the Italian tradition, hence to the Latin ideal which is fighting a death battle with the Teutonic tradition and ideal. Teutonism — militaristic, efficient, materialistic, unimaginative, unindividual — has challenged openly the world. Italy responded nobly to that challenge.

VI

The Eve of the War

ROME became still, so still as to be oppressive. Her heart was elsewhere, — in the north whither the King was about to go. Rome, like all the war capitals, having played her part must relapse more and more into a state of waiting and watching, stirred occasionally by rumors and rejoicings. The streets were empty, for all men of military age had gone and others had returned to their normal occupations. Officers hurried toward the station in cabs with their boxes piled before them. And the sound of marching troops also on the way to the station did not cease at once.

Saturday, the 22d of May, I took the night express for Venice. The train of first- and second-class coaches was longer than usual, filled with officers rejoining their regiments which had already gone north in the slower troop trains. There were also certain swarthy persons in civilian garb, whom it took no great divination to recognize as secret police agents. The spy mania had begun. Theirs was the hopeless task of sorting out civilian enemies from nationals, which, thanks to the complexity of modern international relations, is like picking needles from a haystack. My papers, how-

ever, were all in order, and so far there had been no restrictions on travel; in fact no military zone had been declared, because as yet there was no war! When would the declaration come? In another week? I settled myself comfortably in my corner opposite a stout captain who rolled himself in his gray cloak and went to sleep. Other officers wandered restlessly to and fro in the corridor outside, discussing the coming war. It was a heavenly summer night. The Umbrian Hills swam before us in the clear moonlight as the train passed north over the familiar, beautiful route. If Germany should strike from behind at Milan, exposing the north of Italy? One shuddered. After Belgium Germany was capable of any attack, and Germany was expected then to go with her ally.

One thing was evident over and above the beauty of the moonlit country through which we were rushing at a good pace, and that was the remarkable improvement in Italian railroading since my last visit to Italy a dozen years before. This was a modern rock-ballasted, double-tracked roadbed, which accounted in part for the rapidity and ease of the troop movements these last months. The ordinary passenger traffic had scarcely been interrupted even now on the eve of war. The terrors of the mobilization period, thanks to Italy's efficient preparation, were unfounded. It spoke well for Italy at war. It was a sign of her economic development, her moderni-

zation. Even Germany had not gone into the business of war more methodically, more efficiently. Italy, to be sure, had nine months for her preparation, but to one who remembered the country during the Abyssinian expedition, time alone would not explain the improvement.

The railroad stations at Florence and Bologna were under military control, the quays patrolled, the exits guarded, the buildings stuffed with soldiers. I could see their sleeping forms huddled in the straw of the cattle cars on the sidings, also long trains of artillery and supplies. Shortly after daylight the guards pulled down our shutters and warned us against looking out of the windows for the remainder of the journey. A childish precaution, it seemed, which the officers constantly disregarded. But when I peeped at the sunny fields of the flat Lombard plain, one of the swarthy men in civilian black leaned over and firmly pulled down the shade. Italy was taking her war seriously.

At Mestre we lost the officers: they were going north to Udine and — beyond. The almost empty train rolled into the Venetian station only an hour late. The quay outside the station was strangely silent, with none of that noisy crew of boatmen trying to capture arriving *forestieri*. They had gone to the war. One old man, the figure of Charon on his dingy poop, sole survivor of the gay tribe, took me aboard and ferried me through the network of silent canals toward the

piazza. Dismantled boats lay up along the waterways, the windows of the palaces were tightly shuttered, and many bore paper signs of renting. "The Austrians," Charon laconically informed me. It would seem that Venice had been almost an Austrian possession, so much emptiness was left at her flight. But within the little squares and along the winding stony lanes between the ancient palaces, Venice was alive with citizens and soldiers — and very much herself for the first time in many centuries. The famous piazza recalled the processional pictures of Guardi. Only the companies of soldiers that marched through it on their way to the station were not gorgeously robed: they were in dirty gray with heavy kits on their backs. The bronze horses were being lowered from St. Mark's, one of them poised in midair with his ramping legs in a sling. Inside the church a heavy wooden truss had been put in place to strengthen the arch of gleaming mosaics. There was a tall hoarding of fresh boards along the water side of the Ducal Palace, and the masons were fast filling in the arches with brick supports. Venice was putting herself in readiness for the enemy. Even the golden angel on the new Campanile had been shrouded in black in order that she might not attract a winged monster by her gleam. From many a palace roof aerial guns were pointed to the sky, and squads of soldiers patrolled the platforms that had been hastily built to hold them.

Out at San Niccolo da Lido, where I supped at a little *osteria* beneath the trees, a number of gray torpedo boats rushed to and fro in the harbor entrance, restless as hunting dogs straining at the leash. That night Venice was dark, so black that one stumbled from wall to wall along the narrow lanes in the search for his own doorway. War was close at hand: the menace of it, a few miles, a few hours only away, across the blue Adriatic, at Pola. In order to understand the significance of frontiers an American should be in Venice on the eve of war.

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Some hours later I awoke startled from a heavy sleep, the reverberation of a dream ringing in my ears. It was not yet dawn. In the gray-blue light outside the birds were wheeling in frightened circles above the garden below my balcony. Mingled in my dreams with the disturbing noise was the song of a nightingale — and then there came another dull, thunderous explosion, followed immediately by the long whine and shriek of sirens at the arsenal, also the crackle of machine guns from all sides. Now I realized what it meant. It was war. The Austrians had taken this way to acknowledge Italy's defiance. The enemy had threatened to destroy Venice, and this was their first attempt. Above the sputter of the machine guns and the occasional explosions of shrapnel could be distinguished the buzz of an aeroplane

that moment by moment approached nearer. Soon the machine itself became visible, flying oddly enough from the land direction, not from the Adriatic. It flew high and directly across Venice, aiming apparently for the arsenal, the Lido, the open sea.

It was an unreality, that little winged object aloft like a large aerial beetle buzzing busily through the still gray morning sky, heading straight with human intelligence in a set line, bent on destruction. The bombs could not be seen as they fell, of course, but while I gazed into the heavens another thunderous explosion came from near by, which I took to be the aviator's bomb, distinguished by the sharpness of its explosion from the anti-aircraft bombardment. Other guns along the route of the enemy took up the attack, then gradually all became silent once more. Only the cries of the frightened birds circling above the garden and the voices of the awakened inhabitants could be heard. From every window and balcony half-dressed people watched the flight of the monoplane until it had disappeared in the vague dawn beyond St. Mark's.

In another half-hour the sirens shrieked again and the machine gun on the roof of the Papadopoli Palace just below on the Grand Canal began to sputter. This time every one knew what it meant and there was a large gathering on the balconies and in the little squares to witness the arrival of the hostile aeroplane. It was another monoplane

coming from the same land direction, flying much lower than the first one, so low that its hooded aviator could be distinguished and the bands of color across the belly of the car. It skirted the city toward the Adriatic more cautiously. Later it was rumored that the second aeroplane had been brought down in the lagoons and its men captured.

Thereafter no one tried to sleep: the little Venetian bridges and passages were filled with talking people, and rumors of the damage done began to come in. Eleven bombs in all were dropped on this first attack, killing nobody and doing no serious harm, except possibly at the arsenal where one fell. I was at the local police station when one of the unexploded bombs was brought in. It was of the incendiary type containing petroleum. Also there had been picked up somewhere in the canals the half of a Munich newspaper, which seemed to indicate, although there was nothing of special significance in the sheet, that the monoplane was German rather than Austrian. Yet Germany had not yet declared war on Italy. But was it not the German Kaiser who had threatened to destroy Italy's art treasures? Were not the German armies in Flanders and France making war against defenceless, unmilitary monuments?

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I realized now the necessity of those preparations to guard the treasures of Venice, priceless

and irreplaceable — why the Belle Arti had been emptied, and the Colleoni trussed with an ugly wooden framework. But little at the best could be done to protect Venice herself, which lies exposed in all her fragile loveliness to the attacks of the new Vandals. The delicate palaces, — already crumbling from age, — the marvelous façade of the Ducal Palace with its lustrous color, the leaning *campanili*, the little churches filled with noble monuments to its great ones, — all were helpless before an aerial attack, or shelling from warships. Nothing could save Venice from even a slight bombardment, quite apart from such pounding as the Germans have given Rheims, or Arras, or Ypres. At the first hostile blow Venice would sink into the sea, a mass of ruins, returning thus bereaved to her ancient bridegroom.

Italy is aware of the vengeful warfare she must expect. Great preparations for the defense of Venice have been made. The city might be ruined; it could not be taken. The gray destroyers moving in and out past the Zattere contrasted strangely with the tiny gondolas shaped like pygmy triremes. It was the mingling of two worlds, — the world of the gondola, the marble palace of the doges, of the jeweled church of St. Mark's, and the world of the torpedo boat and the aerial bomb, — the world as man is making it to-day. The old Venetians were good fighters, to be sure, not to say quarrelsome. War was never long absent, as may easily be realized from the

great battle-pieces in the Ducal Palace. But war then was more the rough play of boisterous children than the slaughterous, purely destructive thing that modern men have made it. And when those old Venetians were not fighting, they were building greatly, beautifully, lovingly: they were making life resplendent.

That awakening in the early dawn into the modern world of distant enemies and secret deadly missiles was unforgettable. Some one showed me a steel arrow which had been dropped within the arsenal, a small, sharpened, nail-like thing that would transfix a body from head to feet. These arrows are dumped over by the thousands to fall where they will. That little machine a mile and more aloft in the sky, busily buzzing its way across the heavens, is the true symbol of war today, not face to face except on rare occasions, but hellish in its impersonal will to destroy.

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A wonderful day dawned on Venice after the departure of the hostile aeroplanes, a day among days, and all the Venetians were abroad. The attack which brought home the actual dangers to them did not seem to dull their lively spirits. They were busy in the quaint aquatic manner of Venice. The little shops were full of people, the boatmen reviled one another in the narrow canals as they squeezed past, the *vaporetti* and the motorboats snorted up and down the Grand Canal.

Venice seemingly had accepted her liability to night attack as a new condition of her peculiar life.

There were more soldiers than ever moving in the narrow, winding footpaths, the restaurants were full of officers in fresh uniforms. On the water-front beyond the Salute there was much movement among the destroyers. One of these gray seabirds went out at midnight, when war was declared, and took a small Austrian station on the Adriatic. They brought back some prisoners and booty which seemed to interest the Venetians more than the hostile aeroplanes.

Yet with all this warlike activity it was hard to realize the fact of war in Italy, to remember that just over the low line of the Lido the hostile fleets were looking for each other in the Adriatic, that a few miles to the north the attack had begun all along the twisting frontier, that the first caravan of the wounded had started for Padua. As I floated that afternoon over the lagoons past the Giudecca, and the blue Euganean Hills rose out of the gray mist that seems ever to hang on the Venetian horizon, it was impossible to believe in the fact, to realize that all this human beauty around me, the slow accumulation of the ages of the finest work of man, was in danger of eternal destruction. Venice rose from the green sea water like the city of enchantment that Turner so often painted. Venice was never so lovely, so wholly the palace of enchantment as she was then, stripped

of all the tourist triviality and vulgarity that she usually endures at this season. It was Venice left to her ancient self in this hour of her danger. She was like a marvelous, fragile, still beautiful great lady, so delicate that the least violence might kill her! In this dying light of the day she was already something unearthly, on the extreme marge of our modern world. . . .

That evening the restaurant windows were covered tight with shutters and heavy screens before the doors. The waiter put a candle in a saucer before your plate and you ate your food in this wavering light. There was not the usual temptation to linger in the piazza after dinner, for the cafés were all sealed against a betraying gleam of light and the Venetian public had taken to heart the posted advice to stay within doors and draw their wooden shutters. As I entered my room, the moon was rising behind the Salute, throwing its light across the Canal on to the walls of the palaces opposite. The soft night was full of murmuring voices, for Venice is the most vocal of cities. The people were exchanging views across their waterways from darkened house to house, speculating on the chances of another aerial raid tonight. They were making salty jokes about their enemies in the Venetian manner. The moonlight illuminated the broad waterway beneath my window with its shuttered palaces as if it were already day. A solitary gondola came around the bend of the Canal and its boatman began to sing one

of the familiar songs that once was bawled from illuminated barges on spring nights like this, for the benefit of the tourists in the hotels. To-night he was singing it for himself, because of the soft radiance of the night, because of Venice. His song rose from the silver ripple of the waves below, and in the little garden behind the nightingale began to sing. Had he also forgotten the disturber of this morning and opened his heart in the old way to the moonlight May night and to Venice?

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The enemy did not return that night, the moon gave too clear a light. But a few evenings later, when the sky was covered with soft clouds, there was an alarm and the guns mounted on the palace roofs began again bombarding the heavens. This time the darkness was shot by comet-like flashes of light, and the exploding shells gave a strange pyrotechnic aspect to the battle in the air. Again the enemy fled across the Adriatic without having done any special damage. Only a few old houses in the poorer quarter near the arsenal were crumbled to dust.

Since that first week of the war the aeroplane attacks upon Venice have been repeated a number of times, and though the bombs have fallen perilously near precious things, until the Tiepolo frescoes in the Scalsi church were ruined, no great harm had been done. The military excuse — if after Rheims and Arras the Teuton needed an

excuse — is the great arsenal in Venice. The real reason, of course, is that Venice is the most easily touched, most precious of all Italian treasure cities, and the Teuton, as a French general said to me, wages war not merely upon soldiers, but also upon women and children and monuments. It is vengefulness, lust of destruction, that tempts the Austrian aeroplanes across the Adriatic — the essential spirit of the barbarian which the Latin abhors.

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There are some things in this world that can never be replaced once destroyed, and Venice is one of them. And there are some things greater than power, efficiency, and all *kaiserliche Kultur*. Such is Italy with its ever-renewed, inexhaustible youth, its treasure of deathless beauty. As I passed through the fertile fields on my way from Venice to Milan and the north, I understood as never before the inner reason for Italy's entering the war. The heritage of beauty, of humane civilization, — the love of freedom for the individual, the golden mean between liberty and license that is the Latin inheritance, — all this compelled young Italy to fight, not merely for her own preservation, but also for the preservation of these things in the world against the force that would destroy. The spirit that created the Latin has not died. "We would not be an Inn, a Museum," the poet said, and at the risk of all her jewels Italy

bravely defied the enemy across the Alps. This war on which she had embarked after nine long months of preparation is no mere adventure after stolen land, as the Germans would have it: it is a fight unto death between two opposed principles of life.

"He who is not for me is against me." There is no possible neutrality on the greater issues of life.

PART TWO . . FRANCE

Part Two — France

I

The Face of Paris

I SHALL never forget the poignant impression that Paris made on me that first morning in early June when I descended from the train at the Gare de Lyon. After a time I came to accept the new aspect of things as normal, to forget what Paris had been before the war, but as with persons so with places the first impression often gives a deeper, keener insight into character than repeated contacts. I knew that the German invasion, which had swept so close to the city in the first weeks of the war, and which after all the anxious winter months was still no farther than an hour's motor ride from Paris, must have wrought a profound change in this, the most personal of cities. One read of the scarcity of men on the streets, of the lack of cabs, of shuttered shops, of women and girls performing the ordinary tasks of men, of the ever-rising tide of convalescent wounded, etc. But no written words are able to convey the whole meaning of things: one must see with one's own eyes, must feel subconsciously the many details that go to make truth.

When the long train from Switzerland pulled into the station there were enough old men and boys to take the travelers' bags, which is not always the case these war times when every sort of worker has much more than two hands can do. There were men waiters in the station restaurant where I took my morning coffee. It is odd how quickly one scanned these protected workers with the instinctive question — "Why are you too not fighting for your country?" But if not old or decrepit, it was safe to say that these civilian workers were either women or foreigners — Greeks, Balkans, or Spanish, attracted to Paris by opportunities for employment. For the entire French nation was practically mobilized, including women and children, so much of the daily labor was done by them. The little café was full of men, — almost every one in some sort of uniform, — drinking their coffee and scanning the morning papers. Everybody in Paris seemed to read newspapers all day long, — the cabmen as they drove, the passers-by as they walked hastily on their errands, the waiters in the cafés, — and yet they told so little of what was going on *là-bas!* . . . The silence in the restaurant seemed peculiarly dead. A gathering of Parisians no matter where, as I remembered, was rarely silent, a French café never. But I soon realized that one of the significant aspects of the new France since the war was its taciturnity, its silence. Almost all faces were gravely preoccupied with the national task, and

whatever their own small part in it might be, it was too serious a matter to encourage chattering, gesticulating, or disputing in the pleasant Latin way.

Will the French ever recover wholly their habit of free, careless, expressive speech? Of all the peoples under the trials of this war they have become by general report the most sternly, grimly silent. Compared with them the English, deemed by nature taciturn, have become almost hysterically voluble. They complain, apologize, accuse, recriminate. Each new manifestation of Teutonic strategy has evoked from the English a flood of outraged comment. But from the beginning the French have wasted no time on such *bêtise* as they would call it: they have put all their energies into their business, which as every French creature knows is to fight this war through to a triumphant end — and not talk. An extraordinary reversal of national temperaments that! From the mobilization hour it was the same thing: every Frenchman knew what it meant, the hour of supreme trial for his country, and he went about his part in it with set face, without the beating of drums, and he has kept that mood since. Henri Lavedan, in a little sketch of the reunion between a *poilu*, on leave after nine months' absence in the trenches, and his wife, has caught this significant note. The good woman has gently reproached her husband for not being more talkative, not telling her any of his experiences. The soldier says, — "One does n't talk about it, little one, one does

it. And he who talks war does n't fight. . . . Later, I'll tell you, after, when *it* is signed!"

* * *

There were plenty of cabs and taxis on the streets by the time I reached Paris, rather dangerously driven by strangers ignorant of the ramifications of the great city and of the complexities of motor engines. Most of the tram-lines were running, and the metro gave full service until eleven at night, employing many young women as conductors — and they made neat, capable workers. Many of the shops, especially along the boulevards, were open for a listless business, although the shutters were often up, with the little sign on them announcing that the place was closed because the *patron* was mobilized. And there was a steady stream of people on the sidewalks of all main thoroughfares, — at least while daylight lasted, for the streets emptied rapidly after dark when a dim lamp at the intersection of streets gave all the light there was — quite brilliant to me after the total obscurity of Venice at night! But my French and American friends, who had lived in Paris all through the crisis before the battle of the Marne, — with the exodus of a million or so inhabitants streaming out along the southern routes, the dark, empty, winter streets, — found Paris almost normal. The restaurants were going, the hotels were almost all open, except the large ones on the Champs Élysées that had been trans-

formed into hospitals. At noon one would find something like the old frivol in the Ritz Restaurant, — large parties of much-dressed and much-eating women. For the parasites were fluttering back or resting on their way to and from the Riviera, Switzerland, New York, and London. The Opéra Comique gave several performances of familiar operas each week, rendered patriotic by the recitation of the *Marseillaise* by Madame Chenal clothed in the national colors with a mighty Roman sword with which to emphasize "*Aux armes, citoyens!*" The Française also was open several times a week and some of the smaller theaters as well as the omnipresent cinema shows, advertising reels fresh from the front by special permission of the general staff.

The cafés along the boulevards did a fair business every afternoon, but there was a striking absence of uniforms in them owing to the strict enforcement of the posted regulations against selling liquor to soldiers. That and the peremptory closing of cafés and restaurants at ten-thirty reminded the stranger that Paris was still an "entrenched camp" under military law with General Gallieni as governor. . . . The number of women one saw at the cafés, sitting listlessly about the little tables, usually without male companions, indicated one of the minor miseries of the great war. For the *midinette* and the *femme galante* there seemed nothing to do. A paternal government had found occupation and pay for

all other classes of women, also a franc and a half a day for the soldier's wife or mother, but the daughter of joy was left very joyless indeed, with the cold misery of a room from which she could not be evicted "*pendant la guerre*." They haunted the cafés, the boulevards, — ominous, pitiful specters of the manless world the war was making.

Hucksters' carts lined the side streets about the Marché Saint-Honoré as usual, and I could not see that prices of food had risen abnormally in spite of complaints in the newspapers and the discussion about cold storage in the Chamber of Deputies. Restaurant portions were parsimonious and prices high as usual, but the hotels made specially low rates, "*pendant la guerre*," which the English took advantage of in large numbers. The Latin Quarter seemed harder hit by the war than other quarters, emptier, as at the end of a long vacation; around the Arch there was a subdued movement as between seasons. The people were there, but did not show themselves. One went to a simple dinner *à la guerre* at an early hour. All, even purely fashionable persons, were too much occupied by grave realities and duties to make an effort for forms and ceremonies. Life suddenly had become terribly uncomplex, even for the sophisticated. In these surface ways living in Paris was like going back a century or so to a society much less highly geared than the one we are accustomed to. I liked it.

* * *

Even at its busiest hours Paris gave a peculiar sense of emptiness, hard to account for when all about men and women and vehicles were moving, when it was best to look carefully before crossing the streets. It could not be due wholly to the absence of men and the diminution of business — there was at least half of the ordinary volume of movement. Nor was it altogether a cessation of that soft roar of traffic which ordinarily enveloped Paris day and night. It was not exactly like Paris on Sunday — except in the rue de la Paix — as I remembered Paris Sundays. No, it was something quite new — the physical expression of that inner silence, of that tenacity of mute will which I read in all the faces that passed me. Paris was living within, or beyond — *là-bas*, all along those hundreds of miles of earth walls from Flanders to the Vosges, where for nine months their men had faced the invader.

Most of the women one met were in black, almost every one wearing some sort of mourning, for there was scarcely a family in France that had not already paid its toll of life, many several times over. But the faces of these women in black were calm and dry-eyed: there were few outward signs of grief other than the mourning clothes, just an enduring silence. "The time for our mourning is not yet," a Frenchman said whose immediate family circle had given seven of its members. With some, one felt, the time for weeping would never come: they had trans-

muted their personal woe into devotion to others. . . .

There was little loitering and gazing in at shop windows, few shoppers in the empty stores these days. Everybody seemed to have something important that must be done at once and had best be done in sober silence. Even the wounded had lost the habit of telling their troubles. Doctors and nurses related as one of the interesting phenomena in the hospitals this dislike of talking about what they had been through, even among the common soldiers. Most likely their experiences had been too horrible for gossip. There was a conspiracy of silence, a tacit recognition of the futility of words, and almost never a complaint! One day a soldier walked a block to give me a direction, and in reply to my inquiry pointed to his lower jaw where a deep wound was hidden in a thick beard. "A ball," he said simply. It was the second wound he had received, and that night he was going back to his *dépôt*. For they went back again and again into that hell so close to this peaceful Paris, and what happened there was too bad for words. It must be endured in silence.

There were not many troops on the streets, — at least French soldiers and officers; there was a surprising number of English of all branches of the service and a few Belgians. The French were either at the front or in their *dépôts* outside the city. On the Fourteenth of July, when the remains of Rouget de Lisle, the author of the *Mar-*

seillaise, were brought to the Invalides, a few companies of city guards on horseback and of colonial troops in soiled uniforms formed the escort down the Champs Élysées behind the ancient gun carriage that bore the poet's ashes. There were many wounded soldiers, hopelessly crippled or convalescing, in the theaters, at the cafés, and on the streets. As the weeks passed they seemed to become more numerous, though the authorities had taken pains to keep Paris comparatively empty of the wounded. One met them hobbling down the Élysées under the shade of the chestnut trees, in the metro, at the cafés, the legless and armless, also the more horrible ones whose faces had been shot awry. They were so young, so white-faced, with life's long road ahead to be traveled, thus handicapped! There was something wistful often in their silent eyes.

To cope with the grist of wounded, the mass of refugees and destitute, Paris was filled with relief organizations. The sign of some "*œuvre*" decorated every other building of any size, it seemed. Apart from the numerous hospitals, there were hostels for the refugee women and children, who earlier in the war had poured into Paris from the north and east, workrooms for making garments, distributing agencies, etc. All civilian Paris had turned itself into one vast relief organization to do what it could to stanch the wounds of France. Of the relief and hospital side of Paris I have the space to say little: much has been written of it

by those more competent than I. But in passing I cannot refrain from my word of gratitude to those generous Americans who by their acts and their gifts have put in splendid relief the timid inanities of our official diplomacy. While the President has been exchanging futile words with the Barbarian over the murders on the Lusitania, to the bewilderment and contempt of the French nation, the American Ambulance at Neuilly has offered splendid testimony to the real feelings of the vast majority of true Americans, also an excellent example of the generous American way of doing things. That great hospital, as well as the American Clearing-House and the individual efforts of many American men and women working in numberless organizations, encourage a citizen from our rich republic to hold up his head in spite of German-American disloyalty, gambling in munitions stocks, and official timidity.

* * *

Already the French had realized the necessity of creating agencies for bringing back into a life of activity and service the large numbers of seriously wounded — to find for them suitable labor and to reëducate their crippled faculties so that they could support themselves and take heart once more. Schools were started for the blind and the deaf, of whom the war has made a fearful number. I remember meeting one of these pupils,

a young officer, blind, with one arm gone, and wounded in the face. On his breast was the Service Cross and the cross of the Legion of Honor. He was led into the room by his wife, a young school teacher from Algeria, who had given up her position and come to Paris to nurse her fiancé back to life and hope. He was being taught telegraphy by an American teacher of the blind.

In such ways the people of Paris kept themselves from eating their hearts out in grief and anxiety.

* * *

At three o'clock in the afternoons, when the day's *communiqué* was given out from the War Office, little groups gathered in front of the windows of certain shops where the official report was posted. They would scan the usually colorless lines in silence and turn away, as though saying to themselves, — "Not to-day — then to-morrow!" The newsless newspapers abounded in something perhaps more heartening than favorable reports from the front — an endless chronicle of bravery and devotion, of valor, heroism, and chivalry in the trench. That is what fed the anxious hearts of the waiting people, details of the large, heroic picture that France was creating so near at hand, *là-bas*.

There were few occasions for popular gatherings. The taste for "demonstrations" of any sort had gone out of the people. Sympathetic crowds

met the trains from Switzerland that contained the first of the "*grands blessés*," the militarily useless wounded whom Germany at last concluded to give back to their homes. And I recall one pathetic sight which I witnessed by accident — the arrival of one of the long trains from the front bringing back the first "*permissionnaires*," those soldiers who had been given a three or four days' leave after nine months in the trenches. In front of the Gare de l'Est a great throng of women and children were kept back by rope and police, until at the appearance of the uniformed men at the exit they surged forward and sought out each her own man. There were little laughs and sobs and kisses under the flaring gas lamps of the station yard until the last *poilu* had been claimed, and the crowd melted away into Paris.

* * *

Across the street from my hotel there was an elementary school; several times each day a buzz of children's voices rose from the leafy yard into which they were let out for their recess. Again the thin chorus of children's voices came from the schoolroom. It seemed the one completely natural thing in Paris, the one living thing unconscious of the war. Yet even the school children were learning history in a way they will never forget. In one of the provincial schools visited by an inspector, all the pupils rose as a crippled child hobbled into the schoolroom. "He suffered from

the Germans," the teacher explained. "His mates always rise when he appears." A French mother walking with her little boy in one of the parks met a legless soldier, and turning to her child she said sternly, as if to teach an unforgettable lesson, — "Do you see that legless man? The *Boches* did that — remember it!" In these ways the new generation is learning its history, and it is not likely to forget it for many years to come.

* * *

At dawn and dusk in Paris one was likely to hear the familiar buzz of the aeroplane, and looking aloft could detect a dark spot in the clear June sky — one of the aerial guard that keeps perpetual watch over Paris. Sometimes when I came home at night through the dark streets I could see the silver beams of their searchlights sweeping like a friendly comet through the heavens, or watch the dimmed lamp glowing like a red Mars among the lower stars, rising and falling from space to space. Often I was awakened in the gray dawn by the persistent hum of this winged sentry and looked down from my balcony into the misty city beneath, securely sleeping, thanks to the incessant watchfulness of these "eyes of Paris." The aviator would make wide circles above the silent city, then swiftly turn back toward Issy and breakfast. Thanks to the activity of the aerial guard the Zeppelins have done very little damage in Paris and latterly have made no

attempts to sneak down on the city. It is too risky. They have succeeded in killing some peaceable folk near the Gare du Nord, in dropping one bomb on Notre Dame, I believe, — for which they have less excuse than even for Louvain or Rheims, — and in making a big hole close to the Trocadero. This after all the vaunted terrors of the Zeppelins! What they have done, what they could do at the best is of the nature of petty damage and occasional murder. Instead of terrorizing the Parisians the Zeppelin raids have merely roused a vivid sense of sportsmanship and curiosity among them — at first they had a real *réclame!*

Day by day as I lived in Paris the city took on more of its ordinary activities and aspects. More people flowed by along the boulevards or sat at the tables in front of the cafés, more shops opened — even the great dressmaking establishments began to operate in an attempt to restore commercial circulation. More transients flitted through the city. There were more people of a Sunday in the Bois and at Vincennes. Considering that less than a year before the national government had left Paris, together with a million of its people, also that the battle-line had remained all these months almost within hearing, it was marvelous how quietly much of the ordinary machinery of life had been set running again. Yet Paris was not the same. It was a Paris almost wholly stripped to the outward eye of that parasitic luxury with which it has catered to the self-

indulgent of the world. Paris — as had been the case with Italy — had returned under the stress of its tragedy to its best self — a suffering, tense, deeply earnest self. If the nation conquers — and there is not a Frenchman who believes any other solution possible — victory will be of the highest significance to the race. It will fix in the French people another character wrought in suffering — a deeper, nobler, purer character than her enemies, or her friends for that matter, have believed her to possess. Paris will never again become so totally submerged in the business of providing international frivolities. She has lived too long in the face of death.

II

The Wounds of France

THE wounds of France are still bleeding. The trench wall still lies for four hundred miles across the fair face of the country from the Vosges to the North Sea, and the invader rules some of her richest provinces, in all an area equal to something less than a tenth of the whole.

The wounds have already begun to heal in the marvelous manner of nature: already life has begun again in the valley of the Marne; the vineyards and grainfields run close up to the front trenches. Yet even where the scar has covered the wound it is plain enough to see how deep that wound has been. The scorched and bruised valley of the Marne, the ruined villages of Champagne and Artois, have been described many times by visiting journalists, yet it is worth while to record once more some of the outstanding features of this rape of France.

* * *

To begin with Senlis, which is one of the nearest points to Paris reached by the German cyclone in September, 1914. There are fewer older towns in France than Senlis, thirty miles or so northeast

of Paris, the center of the old "Island of France." Once a Roman camp whose stout masonry walls can still be seen for considerable distances, it had a mediæval castle, and, until the greater grandeur of Beauvais stole the honor, was a bishopric with a lovely small Gothic cathedral. Its lofty gray spire dominates the green fields and thick woods in the midst of which Senlis sleeps away the modern day. There are other curious and beautiful examples of Gothic building in Senlis: indeed, just here, the experts find the first workings of the principles of pure Gothic architecture, transforming the round-arched, thick-walled Norman building. If for nothing more Senlis would have amply earned its right to live always as the birthplace of French Gothic.

What happened to Senlis when the German troops visited it can be seen at a glance to-day. From the railroad station at one end of the town to the green fields beyond the hospital on the Chantilly road at the other end, a black swath of burned and ruined buildings is the memento. These houses and stores were not shelled: they were burned methodically. The Germans arrived late in the afternoon of the 2d of September, in that state of nervous excitement and hysterical fear of *francs-tirailleurs* that characterized them from the time they passed Liége. The Mayor of Senlis, an old man over seventy, was made to understand that he would be held responsible for the conduct of the citizens, and was ordered to

have water and lights turned on in the town and a dinner for the German staff prepared at the chief hotel. While he was busy with these commands, — most of the inhabitants had fled that morning, — shots were exchanged in the lower end of the town between the Germans and the retreating French. Thereupon the usual order to burn and destroy was given, and the buildings along the main thoroughfare were set on fire. The mayor and six other citizens, gathered haphazard on the streets, were taken to a field outside the town and shot. There were other moving and significant incidents in the occupation of Senlis which are well authenticated, characteristic of the German method, but need not be repeated here.

The older part of the town, the cathedral, the Roman wall fortunately escaped with only a few chance shell holes here and there. The black scar runs through the place from end to end, incontrovertible instance of the German thing, which has been visited by thousands of French and foreigners the past year. The wounds of Senlis are not deep: by comparison with much else done by the Germans they are almost trivial. The murder of the Mayor of Senlis was not a large crime in the German scale. But the whole is nicely typical: Senlis is the kindergarten lesson in the German method of making war.

* * *

As every one knows, the Germans breaking into France at Namur and Mons came on with unexampled rapidity from the north and east toward the south and west, circled somewhat to the west as they neared Paris, and then the 5th of September recoiled under the shock of the French offensive. For the better part of a week two millions of men struggled on a thousand different battlefields from Nancy and Verdun on the east to Coulommiers, Meaux, and Amiens on the south and west. This was the great battle of the Marne, which checked the German invasion. The pressure of this human cyclone, in general from northeast to southwest, was more intense in some places than others. One of the bloodiest storm centers lay east and west from the town of Vitry-le-François — from Sermaize-les-Bains on the east to Fère-le-Champenoise, Montmirail, and Esternay on the west. For fifty miles there in the heart of Champagne the path of the cyclone can be traced by the blackened villages, the gutted churches, the countless crosses in the midst of green fields.

One thinks of Champagne as a land of vineyards, but here in the center and south of the fertile province there are few vines, mostly fields of ripening wheat, green alfalfa, or beets — long undulating swales of rich fields, cut by little copses of thick woods and by white poplar-lined highways as everywhere in France. It has peculiarly that smiling and gracious air of *la douce France* —

gently sloping fields and woods and little gray stone villages each with its small church ornamented by the square tower and spire of Champenoise Gothic. And it was here that the blast struck hardest, along the little streams, in the thick copses, up and down the straight roads whose deep ditches lent themselves to entrenchment, and in almost every village and crossroads hamlet.

It is a country of few towns, of many small villages, farm and manor houses. The buildings cluster in the hollows or about the crossroads, and sometimes they escaped the storm because the shells exchanged from hill to hill went quite over their roofs; again, as was the case with Huiron just outside Vitry or with Maurupt near by, they could not escape because they were perched on hills, and they were almost completely razed by the fierce fire that raked them for days. Sometimes they escaped shell and machine gun to be bùrned to the ground vengefully with incendiary bombs, as at Sermaize-les-Bains, where of nine hundred buildings less than forty were left standing after the Germans retreated. These instances are the saddest of all because so wanton! There was scarcely a single collection of houses in that fifty miles which I traversed which did not bear its ugly scar of fire and shell, scarcely a farmhouse that was not crumbled or peppered with machine-gun bullets. Miles of desolation may be seen in a couple of hours' drive

around Vitry-le-François, — Favresse, Blesmes, Écrinnes, Thiéblemont, Maurupt, Vauclerc, — with acre upon acre of ruined buildings, a chimney standing here and there, heaps of twisted iron that once were farm machines, withered trees — and graves, everywhere soldiers' graves.

The churches suffered most, probably because they were used for temporary defense. At Huiron the upper half of the thirteenth-century Gothic church had been shaved off — in the ten-foot deep mass of débris lay the richly carved capitals of the massive pillars. At Écrinnes near by the apse of the exquisite little church had been blown off, leaving the front and spire intact. At Maurupt the whole edifice, which commanded the rolling countryside for miles, was riddled from end to end. Again, I would enter an apparently sound building to find a pile of rubbish in the nave, a gaping hole in the roof. And the same thing was true about Bar-le-Duc to the east and Meaux to the west. It is safe to say that in a fifty-mile wide stretch from Nancy to the English Channel not one village in ten has escaped the scourge.

* * *

I speak of the churches because of their irreplaceable beauty, the human tenderness of their relation with the earth. But even more poignant, perhaps, were the wrecks of little country homes — the stacks of ruined farm machinery, the gutted barns, the burned houses. In many cases not a

habitable building was left after the cyclone passed. In one hamlet of thirty houses near Esternay I remember, all but seven had been devastated — by incendiary fire. Indeed, it was clearly distinguishable — the "legitimate" wrack of war, from the deliberate spite of incendiarism. Maurupt was the one case, Sermaize-les-Bains (where there was no fighting) the other. If it had been simple war, shell and machine gun, probably fifty per cent or more of the devastation would have been saved. But the German makes war against an entire country, inanimate as well as animate.

The inhabitants of these ruins had come back in many instances — where else had they to go? Swept up before the blast of the cyclone, they had fled south over the fields and hard white roads, then crept back a few days after the cyclone had passed to find their homes pillaged, burned, their villages blackened scars on the earth. But they stayed there! The English Society of Friends has given some money with which to put up wooden huts, on which old men and Belgian refugees were working when I passed that way. There is a French charity that tries to outfit these new homes in the devastated districts, one of the numberless efforts of the French to put their national house in order. But for all that charity can do, the lot of these villagers is a bitter one: their strong men have gone to the front; old men, women, and children are left to scratch the fields,

and exist miserably in the cellars, underneath bits of corrugated iron roof, in tiny wooden huts. But they have planted their potatoes, in the ruins in some cases, and have taken up sturdily the struggle of existence in the wreck of their old homes. The children play among the crumbling walls, the women go barefoot to the public well for water. The fields have been sown and harvested somehow. Until the Germans can kill off the French peasant women, they can never hope to conquer France.

Compared with the burning of homes, the razing of villages, mere pilfering and looting seem commonplace, unreprehensible crimes. Yet the loss of property by plain theft is no inconsiderable item in that bill which France expects to present some day. The old châteaux that were fouled and gutted by the invader, the trainloads of plunder that went back to German cities, the emptied cellars and ransacked houses have fed the fire of disgust and loathing which the French feel for their foe. Yet they should not begrudge the invader the extraordinary quantity of good wine which he consumed on his raid, because the victory of the Marne was doubtless won in part by the aid of the champagne bottle!

* * *

When I passed through the Marne valley the fields were being harvested for the first time since those fatal days in September. Among the har-

vesters were a number of middle-aged men with the soldiers' *képi*, who had been given leave to make the crop, which was unusually abundant. The fields of old Champagne, watered with the best blood of France, had yielded their richest returns. Outside the charred and crumbled ruins of the villages one might have forgotten the fact of war were it not for the graves. Here and there the corner of some wood where a battery had been placed was mowed as if cut by a giant reaper. The tall poplars along the roadsides had been ripped and torn as by a violent storm. Some hillsides were scarred with ripples from burrowing shells, and hastily made trenches had not yet been ploughed completely under. But over the undulating golden fields it would be difficult to trace the course of the tempest were it not for the crosses above the graves, thousands upon thousands of them, — singly, in clumps, in long lines where the dead bodies had been brought out of the copses and buried side by side in trenches, or where at a crossroads a little cemetery had been made to receive the dead of the vicinity.

Often as you crawled along in a train you could follow the battle by the bare spots left in the fields around the graves. They will never be ploughed under and sown, not even the graves of Germans, not in the richest land. Generally they were carefully fenced off, almost always with a simple cross on the point of which hung the soldier's *képi* whenever it was found with the body.

It is remarkable, considering the scarcity of hands, the desolation of the country, the difficulty of existence, what tender care has been given these graves of the unknown dead. Many of them were decorated with fresh flowers or those metal wreaths that the Europeans use, and where a company lay together a little monument had been erected with a simple inscription. It would seem that these Champenoise peasants still retain some of that pagan reverence for the dead which their Latin ancestors had cultivated, mingled with passionate love for those who gave themselves in defense of *la patrie*.

So for years to come the beautiful fields of France will be strewn with these little spots of sanctuary where Frenchmen died fighting the invader. The fields are already green again: Nature is doing her best to remove the scars of battle from this land where so often in the past ages she has been called upon to heal the wounds inflicted by men. Nature will have completed her task long before the ruined villages can be restored, long, long before the scars in men's hearts made by this ruthless invasion can be healed. Another generation, that of the little children playing in the ruins of their fathers' homes, must grow up with hate in their hearts and die before the wounds can be forgotten.

* * *

The Germans were shelling Rheims the day I was there. From the little Mountain of Rheims, five miles away on the Épernay road, I could see the gray and black clouds from bursting shells rise in the mist around the massive cathedral. An observation balloon was floating calmly over the hill beyond, directing the fire on the desolated city. It was necessary to wait outside the town until a lull came in the bombardment, and when our motor at last entered, it was like speeding through a city of the dead, with crushed walls, weed-grown streets, and empty silence everywhere save for the low whine of the big shells. With the five or six hundred large shells hurled into Rheims that one day, the Germans killed three civilians, wounded eighteen more, and knocked over some hollow houses already gutted in previous bombardments. They did not damage the cathedral that day, though several explosions occurred within a few feet of the building.

There were no soldiers, no artillery in Rheims — there have not been any for many months. Of its one hundred and thirty thousand people, only twenty thousand were left hiding in cellars, skulking along the walls, clinging to their homes in the immense desolation of the city with that tenacity which is peculiarly French. In the afternoon when the fire ceased the boys were playing in the streets and women sat in front of their cellar homes sewing. They have adapted themselves to sudden death. They move about from hole to

hole in the wilderness of shattered buildings. For the city had been gutted by the acre: street after street was nothing but an empty shell of walls that crumpled up from time to time and tottered over. Within lay an indescribable mass of household articles, merchandise, all that once had been homes and stores and factories.

Around the cathedral there was a peculiar silence, for this quarter of the city which received most of the shells is absolutely deserted. The grass grew high between the stones in the pavement all about. The sun was throwing golden cross-lights over the battered walls as I came into the deserted square and stood beside the little figure of Jeanne d'Arc before the great portal. As seen from afar, now in the full nearer view, the amazing thing was the majesty of the windowless, roofless, defaced cathedral. Acres of other buildings have crumbled utterly, but not even the German guns have succeeded in smashing the dignity out of this ancient altar of French royalty. It still stands firm and mighty, dominating its ruined city, as if too old, too deeply rooted in the soil of France to be crushed by her enemies. After a year of bombardment it still raised its mutilated face in dumb protest above the crumbling dwellings of its people, whom it could no longer protect from the barbarian.

Not that the Germans have spared the cathedral in their senseless bombardment of Rheims! From that first day, when their own wounded lay

within its walls and were carried out of the burning building by the French, until the morning I was there, when a shell tore at the ground beneath the buttresses hitherto untouched, the Germans seem to have taken a special malignant delight in shelling the cathedral. They have already damaged it beyond the possibility of complete repair, even should their hearts at this late day be miraculously touched by shame for what they have done and their guns should cease from further desecration. The glorious glass has already been broken into a million fragments; many of the finely executed mouldings and figures — irreplaceable specimens of a forgotten art — have been crushed; great wall spaces pounded and marred. It is as if a huge, fat German hand had ground itself across a delicately moulded face, smearing and smudging with vindictive energy its glorious beauty. Rheims Cathedral must bear these brutal German scars forever, even should the vandal hand be stayed now. It can never again be what it was — the full, marvelous flowering of Gothic art, precious heritage from dim centuries long past. Like a woman at the full flower of her life who has been raped and defiled, all the perfection of her ripened being defaced in a moment of lust, she will live on afterward with a certain grandeur of horror in her eyes, of tragic dignity that can never utterly be erased from her outraged person. . . .

A French officer, speculating on the German

intentions with that admirably dispassionate intelligence with which the French consider these brutal manifestations of the German mind, remarked, "At present they seem engaged in ringing the cathedral with their fire, as if to see how close they can come without hitting the building itself, but of course from that distance they must sometimes miss." One theory why the enemy pursues this unmilitary monument with such peculiarly relentless ferocity is that they enjoy the outcry which their vandalism creates. Moreover, it is a way of boasting to the world that they have not yet been expelled from their positions behind Rheims, are not being driven back. If any special explanation were needed, I should find it rather in the fact that Rheims is peculiarly associated with French history,— minster of her kings,— and its destruction would be especially bruising to French pride. William the Second probably swells with magnitude at the thought of destroying with his big guns this sanctuary of French kings. Some of the graven kings still cling to their niches in the lofty façade. Two have been taken to the ground for safety and look out with horror in their blind eyes at the ruin all about them. The little figure of Jeanne d'Arc, rescuer of a French king, still stands untouched before the great portal, astride her prancing horse, bravely waving her bronze flag. Around her were heaped garlands of fresh flowers, touching evidence that the city of Rheims still holds stout

souls with faith in the ultimate salvation of their great church, who lay their tribute at the feet of the virgin warrior. Once she protected their ancestors from a less barbarous enemy.

What use to enumerate the wounds and outrages in minute detail? For by to-day more of this unique beauty has gone to that everlasting grave from which no German skill can resurrect it. . . . Within, the cathedral has been less spoiled, but is even sadder. One walked over the stone pavement crunching fragments of the purple glass that had fallen from the gorgeous windows, now sightless. Once at this hour it was all aglow with color, radiating a mysterious splendor into the vaults of transept and nave. A shell had blasted its way into one corner, another had rent the roof vaulting near the crossing of transept and nave. The columns and arches were blackened by the smoke of that fire which caught in the straw on which the German wounded lay. There was something peculiarly forlorn, ghostly within the dim ruins of what was once so great, and I was glad to escape to the old hospital in the close, now turned into a hospital for the cathedral itself. Here on benches and in piles about the floor of the low-vaulted room had been gathered those fragments of statue and moulding that a pious search could rescue from the débris around the cathedral. In this room, while the German guns were still raining shells upon Rheims, an old man in workman's apron was already moulding casts of the

faces and lines of the shattered stones so that in some happier day an effort to reproduce them might be made. I saw between his trembling old fingers the fine features of a stone angel which he was covering with clay. I know of nothing more beautifully eloquent of the French spirit than this labor of preservation. Within range of shell fire this old man was calmly working to save what he might of the beauty that had been so prodigally murdered. If spiritual laws are still operative in this mad world of ours, the Latin must endure and conquer because of his unshakable faith. . . .

At the hill on the Épernay road I looked back for a last view of the cathedral. The evening mist was already creeping over its scarred walls. With the two towers lifting the great portal to the sky, it dominated the valley, the ruined city at its feet, a monument of men's aspirations raising its head high into the sky in spite of the unseen missiles that even then were beginning once more their attack. I would that these words might go to swell that cry which has gone up from all civilized peoples at the sacrilege to Rheims! Even now something of its majesty and its glory might be saved if the German guns were silenced — if within the German nation there were left any respect for the ancient decencies and traditions of man. But I know too well with what contempt the Germans view such pleas for beauty, for old memories and loves. They are but "sentimental weakness," in the words of the "War Book," along with respect

for defenseless women and children. The people who gloried in the sinking of the Lusitania will hardly be moved to refrain from the destruction of a cathedral. Rheims — unless saved by a miracle — is doomed. And it is because neither beauty nor humanity, neither ancient tradition nor common pity can touch the modern German, that this war must be fought to a real finish. There is not room in this world for the German ideal and the Latin ideal: one must die.

* * *

The tragedy of Rheims has been repeated again and again — at Soissons, at Arras, at Ypres, in every town and village throughout that blackened band of invaded France from the Vosges to the sea. Also the tragedy of exiled and imprisoned country folk, of ruined farms and houses, of mere destruction.

The wounds of France are so many, the outward physical bleeding of the land is so vast, that volumes have been written already as the record. Very little can be said or written about another wound, — the lives of those in the invaded provinces behind the German lines, — for almost nothing is known as to what has happened there, what is going on now. A word now and then comes from that dead, no man's land; a rare fugitive escapes from the conqueror's hand. The military rule forbids any correspondence through neutrals, as is permitted prisoners of war, to those

held "behind the lines." The inhabitants are kept as prisoners. Worse, they have been used at certain places along the front as bucklers against the fire of their countrymen — in a quarry near Soissons, at Saint-Mihiel. It is known that heavy imposts are laid upon them, as at Lille, and that the invader is exploiting this richest part of France's industrial territory. This last wound is, perhaps, the most serious of all for France, in this modern, machine war. Latterly rumor has it that the treatment of the inhabitants imprisoned behind the German lines has become less rigorous, because, as a French general explained, — "They hope to make peace with us — *quelle sale race!*"

These wounds are still bleeding. They cannot be ignored. They, as well as the death, suffering, and agony of the long trench combat, make the faces of the French tense, silent. "To think that they are still here after a whole year since this happened!" a young Frenchman exclaimed in bitterness of soul as we looked out over the thickly scattered graves in the fields around Bercy. To him it was as if a crazed and drunken marauder had taken possession of his house, burned a part of it, and still caroused in another wing. The unforgettable, unforgivable wounds of France!

The French, so clear-seeing, so reasonable even about their own tragedies, are bitter to the soul when they think of the brutality done to their

"*douce France.*" To the French, quite as much as to the Bryanited American, war is a senseless, inhuman thing; but it becomes direfully necessary when the home has been burned and laid waste. The Gallic spirit cannot understand that spirit of malevolent destruction which vengefully wreaks its spite against defenseless and inanimate works of age to be reverenced, of art to be loved. There are certain scrupulosities of soul in the Latin that divide him from his enemy, more effectually than a thousand years of life and an entire world of space.

III

The Barbarian

THE barbarian, as the Greeks used the word, was not necessarily a person or a people without civilization. Indeed, certain ancient peoples known as barbarians had a high degree of luxury, civilization. The Persians under the barbarian Xerxes were probably quite the equals in the mechanics of civilization of the Greeks, and the Egyptians could lay claim to a large amount of what even the Greeks considered culture. The barbarian was a person or a nation without a spiritual sense in his values. The barbarian was often strong, able, intelligent, "organized" as we say, but he was incapable of self-government: the barbarian nations were ruled despotically. Their position in the world depended upon the force and the ability of the particular despot who got control of their destinies. The barbarian peoples were often crude in what is called fine art. They neither believed in nor practiced those amenities of daily life which express themselves superficially in manners, more deeply in sensitive inhibitions, nor those amenities of the soul which are known as honor, justice, mercy. The barbarian despised as soft and degenerate such persons as permitted themselves to be

trammeled in their conduct by non-utilitarian considerations. In his primitive state the barbarian's instinct was to destroy what he could not understand; as he became more sophisticated, his instinct was to imitate what he could not create.

What, above all, the barbarian cannot appreciate is the suave mean of life, the ideal of individual human excellence, of a tempered social control, the liberty of the individual within the fewest possible restrictions to work out his own scheme of existence, his own civilization. For the barbarian mind recognizes only two sorts of beings — the master and the slave. One is a tyrant and the other is a docile imitation of manhood. The barbarian never totally dies from the world. In every race, in every nation, in every community fine examples of the barbarian instinct, the barbarian philosophy of existence can be found. I have known personally a great many barbarians, — American life is full of them, — and my knowledge of them, of their strengths and their limitations, has given me my understanding of the modern German as manifested in this world war.

* * *

Real truth often underlies popular nomenclature. It is neither accident nor a desire to abuse that has given the German the name of barbarian in the Latin nations. Just as the Latin peoples are the inheritors of Greek ideals, so the German peoples seem to be the active modern protagonists

of all that the Greeks meant by their term "barbarian." The French before the war regarded the Germans as not wholly well-bred persons, lacking in some of those niceties of feeling and conduct which seemed to them important — "*parvenus*" as a French officer characterized his feeling about the race, and added the descriptive adjective "*sale*" — dirty. Since the war there has been ground into the French the more awful inhumanities of which these *parvenus* are capable. Therefore, when they think of the German, there comes instinctively to their lips the ancient term of complete distinction, — *les barbares*, — by which is meant a person and a nation who are not governed by ideals of taste, honor, humanity, what to the non-barbarian are summed up in the one word "decency." The adjective that the officer used — "*sale*" — does not imply necessarily literal physical dirt, but a moral callousness and unrefinement of soul which in the spiritual realm corresponds with the term "dirty" in the physical. He sees the soul of the German as a dirty soul, unclean, unsqueamish. And this conception of the enemy has given to the French soldier something of that crusader spirit which has sustained him through his terrible conflict. As M. Émile Hovelaque has expressed it, — "France is fighting the battle of humanity, of the world, of America, of every nation, man, and child who are resolved to live their own life in their own way, under the dictates of their conscience, within the

limits of the laws they have accepted." The battle of the world to push back once more the pest of barbarism! It is that which has roused French chivalry, French heroism, not merely the love of the *patrie*. Indeed, for the higher spirits the *patrie* is closely identified with the non-barbaric ideals of humanity.

* * *

The whole conscious world has had the manifestations of the new barbarism before its eyes for an entire year and more. It has recoiled in disgust from the invasion of Belgium, the sinking of the Lusitania, the shooting of Edith Cavell, from the wanton destruction of monuments. All these barbarities are indisputable facts, which may be explained and extenuated, but cannot be denied. There is another class of barbarities, — the so-called "atrocities," — which are more easily denied, but which most people who have taken the trouble to examine the charges know to be equally true. The record of these multiplied atrocities is so enormous and so well authenticated that it would seem to me useless to add any words to the theme were it not for an amazing attitude of indifference to the subject on the part of many Americans. "We don't want to hear any more atrocity stories," they say. "Perhaps the atrocities have been exaggerated, probably there's truth on both sides. Anyway, war is brutal as every one knows." Some newspapers will not publish the atrocity

charges, whether because of our popular prejudice against anything "unpleasant" unless freshly sensational or because of more sinister reasons, the reader may judge.

This attitude is both evasive and cowardly. It is essential to understand the atrocity for a proper realization of the war and of the German menace. It is false to say that all war is barbarous, and that in every war similar atrocities have occurred. As Mr. Hilaire Belloc has well said, — "Men have often talked during this war . . . as though the crime accompanying Prussian activities in the field were normal to warfare. . . . It is of the very first importance to appreciate the truth that Prussia in this campaign has postulated in one point after another new doctrines which repudiate everything her neighbors have held sacred from the time when a common Christianity first began to influence the states of Europe. The violation of the Belgian territory is on a par with the murder of civilians in cold blood, and after admission of their innocence, with the massacre of priests and the sinking without warning of unarmed ships with their passengers and crews. To regard these things as something normal to warfare in the past is as monstrous an historical error as it would be to regard the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution as normal to civil disputes within the states."

It is the business of every person who is concerned about anything more than his own selfish

fate to examine into the atrocity charges and to convince himself, not only of the truth, but of the more serious implications in their premeditated and persistent character. The record has been well made, fortunately, often in judicial form. It is already voluminous and being added to constantly. Best of all the evidence, perhaps, are the German diaries of soldiers and officers, extracts of which have been edited by Professor Bédier, of the Collège de France, with facsimile photographs of the texts. Next I should place in evidence the so-called German "War Book" ("Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege"), where under the convenient title of "Indispensable Severities" may be found the text for many of the worst atrocities committed in Belgium and France.

If the atrocity charge against the Germans is false or exaggerated, it is surely time to know it, but no mere denial or general argument can be accepted in rebuttal. The world must convince itself of the truth. The German crimes have been too many and too public, too well authenticated by witnesses to be disproved by mere denial. The best public opinion of the world has condemned military Germany as a barbarous outlaw. The crimes committed with the connivance of the supreme military authorities, authorized by their instructions to their officers, have fouled the name German for eternity: it will be coupled with Vandal, Tartar, Barbarian.

* * *

I believe the atrocity charges to be substantially true in a vast majority of cases. Moreover, I do not believe that half the truth of them has been told or ever will be. My reasons for this belief in the atrocity charge are the following: First, undisputed crimes, such as the Lusitania and Cavell cases. A government that would sanction these murders would sanction all other atrocities. Second, the witness of persons in whose credibility I have confidence, such as French officers and civilians, nurses and doctors, whose occupations have thrown first-hand evidence in their way, who have personal knowledge of specific outrages. Third, from what I myself gathered while I was in France from the lips of abused persons. Although I did not look for atrocities, I could not avoid getting reports from such people as I met in the devastated territory of the Marne, weighing their stories, and estimating the validity of them.

I believe in the truthfulness of that abbé of Esternay, who was one of the unfortunates that the Germans used as a screen before the operations of a body of troops. I believe in the truthfulness of the keen old peasant woman at Châtillon, whose home had been riddled by German bullets and who had been fired at when she took refuge in the cellar of her house, and of many others with whom I talked of their experiences during the early days of September, 1914. Unfortunately, there was no photographer at work

those days along the Marne valley, though no doubt the German denying office would instantly impugn the evidence of a photograph of the act. Each one of us, however, has his own inner instinctive tests of truth to which he puts the credibility of a story, and I believe the abbé, the old woman, and many others who suffered abominably at the hands of German soldiers.

One fact only too evident to anybody who has followed in German footsteps through the valley of the Marne is the part that mere drunkenness had in this affair. The flower of the German army was incredibly drunken throughout the advance into France. Pillage, rape, incendiarism followed inevitably. They are common crimes to be expected where an exhausted soldiery is inflamed with drink. But the cowardly slaughter of non-combatants, the wanton destruction of monuments, the brutal tyrannies toward conquered peoples — these are the blacker crimes against the German name.

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Self-control is not a Teutonic ideal. Of all the psychological surprises that the war has revealed, the exhibition of the German temperament has not been one of the least. Not its frank philosophic materialism, which any one who had followed the drift of German thought and literature might have expected, but its extraordinary lack of self-control. English and Americans are taught

that an individual who cannot master his own temper is unfit to master others. Yet here is a people pretending to world rule whose tempers individually are so little under control that they explode in senseless passion on the least provocation. The German nation froths with hate first against the English because they were neither as cowardly nor selfish as had been expected, then against the Italians because they would not listen to Prince von Bülow's song, latterly against Americans because the United States dared to question the divine right of Germany to do with neutrals what she pleased. Judging from the German press and from the Germans whom I have met, the German nation is living in a ferment of rage, all the more extraordinary as the fighting seems to have gone their way thus far. What would happen to this uncontrolled people should the war take an unfavorable turn and not supply them with daily victories? Self-control is not included in that famous German discipline. Uncontrolled tempers, drink, the ordinary fund of brutality in the pit of human beings with the extraordinary conditions of war will explain much of all this barbarism — but not all.

The supreme evidence of German atrocities is to be found in the infamous "Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege," a singular revelation of national character in which the German general staff has summed up for young officers the principles that should govern the conduct of invading armies.

One finds here, — "By steeping himself in military history an officer will be able to guard himself against excessive humanitarian notions; it will teach him that certain severities are indispensable to war, nay, more, that the only true humanity very often lies in a ruthless application of them." This convenient generalization covers the multitude of Belgian crimes. This interesting manual of conduct for officers further warns against "sentimentalism and flabby emotion," such as are embodied in the Hague Conventions, and after stating the generally accepted rule or custom of warfare warns that exceptions are always permissible where the officer deems exceptional severities are "indispensable." After perusing the "Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege," need one seek more evidence of German atrocities from the levying of confiscatory fines upon conquered peoples to the use of noncombatants as human screens in military operations? The germ of the barbarous system is there contained in its entirety.

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But the implication of all this is much deeper than might appear on the surface. Such a theory of warfare as is set forth in the "War Book," as has been exemplified throughout the war, having its climax to date in the murder of Edith Cavell, is not the result of uncontrolled passions wrought to ferocity. It is deliberate, preconceived, de-

fended,—an article of faith intimately bound up with the German ideal of the state. There is the danger. That the precept of the higher military authorities is accepted by the general public may be seen in the following passage from the Hamburg "Fremdenblatt"—or is it but a press note inserted by the high commandment? "Toxic gases are simply a new instrument of warfare; they are condemned because they are not universally adopted. . . . In warfare humanity does not exist and cannot exist. All the lucubrations of the Hague Conferences on this subject are childish babbling. New technical knowledge gives new arms to those who are not fools and know how to use them. . . . Knowledge creates power, power creates law, law creates humanity. All these are changing ideas and Germans are not disposed to discuss them during the war."

An Indian on the warpath scalps, burns, tortures, and we say it is the Indian nature to do these things. So-called civilized white men have gone on the loose in and out of war and have done many shameful deeds: we blush for them and draw the veil. But what never before has been accomplished is to have barbarism deliberately inculcated as part of the policy of warfare by a so-called civilized state; also warfare considered to be the flower of statecraft. Clausewitz lays down the principle that war is the legitimate carrying-out of state policy; the state relies upon war to execute its designs. The German military author-

ities announce and print for the use of their officers that in war deviation from any recognized principle of conduct is permitted under the excuse of "indispensable severity" — for the sake of terrorizing hostile peoples — and humanitarianism is condemned as "sentimentalism and flabby emotion."

There we have the gist of the whole affair — what makes the Frenchman instinctively consider the German to be a barbarian, what makes modern Germany the menace of the entire world. It is not its militaristic ideals, its mechanical civilization, not even its brutality and vulgarity, not even the ferocity of its warfare: it is the methodical application of this underlying principle of conduct which has been inculcated into the people so that they rejoice at the sinking of the Lusitania, which has been employed in this war systematically from the first day. This is the barbarian essence of the German character.

It is not the raping of women, not the staff officers' drunken orgies in châteaux, not the looting and burning of houses, not the stupid treatment of Belgians and French "hostages," etc. All these are distressing but not necessarily characteristic. It is the principle of the legitimacy of evil provided only that evil works to the advantage of the German state. That is the vicious term in the German syllogism. The state can do no wrong: therefore the individual acting for the state can do no wrong. The one supreme end sanctioned

by divine authority is the endurance and the magnification of the German state. Whatever a German may do or cause to be done with this holy end in view is not merely just and reasonable, but necessary and praiseworthy. Hence there follows, naturally, the vile system of German espionage, of propaganda in neutral countries, the indiscriminate use of the submarine weapon, terrorization, military murders of civilians, and all the rest of the long count against Germany. Assume the vital major premise and the rest follows inevitably, provided her citizens are both docile and have a natural fund of brutality.

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"In warfare humanity does not exist and cannot exist. All the lucubrations of the Hague Conferences on this subject are childish babbling. . . . Knowledge creates power, power creates law, law creates humanity. All these are changing ideas."

The world has known the barbarian always; we are all acquainted with him from personal experience. But the world has never before known a reasoned, intellectual barbarism, a barbarian that has elevated into a philosophy of human life with the sanctions of religion his instincts and impulses. And that is the menace of the German, not his force nor his brutality, but the risk that he can successfully impose upon the world such an atrocious creed, intimidating into imitation those cowardly souls whom he does not care to

conquer. If Germany were to win this war, it would not be her bumptious aggression that the world ought to fear so much as the enormous impulse it would give to her detestable creed, to the principle of evil in the world. The danger for us Americans is greater than for others, not because of exposed coasts and an unprepared army, but because we are already tainted with the same raw materialism of belief. Too many individuals in America would find a sympathetic echo in their own hearts to the German creed of collective selfishness and barbarism.

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One heard in Paris surprisingly little about German atrocities, less than in Boston and New York, much less than in London. Not that the French do not believe them: they know the bitter truth about German inhumanity as none others. With that admirable stoicism and lucid conservation of moral force displayed by the French from the beginning, they do not waste their strength in denunciation: they have accepted it as one of the terrible aspects of the evil they are fighting. They probably understand the German character as now wholly revealed better than the rest of the world and are not so much surprised by its manifestations. They have examined the German, and have fortified themselves against his cruel power.

But they cannot forget these incredible out-

rages. There are too many fresh examples — too many robbed and maltreated refugees, too many fatherless and motherless children, still coming to Paris by the trainload, whom they must provide for, too many relatives and friends who have been abused and murdered or whose property has been looted by German soldiers and officers. Also there are too many Frenchmen who have seen the horrors with their own eyes, too many doctors and stretcher-bearers shot down by those they were trying to aid, too many hospitals bombarded, too many wounded prisoners killed. The German atrocity is documented in France over and over, within the knowledge of millions. It will prove to be Germany's great stumbling-block after the war, when she looks about a shocked world for peoples to trade with.

* * *

In the dining-room of the military club at Commercy, where a corps of the French army now has its headquarters, there is a wall painting of the last century representing the heroic deeds of Jeanne d'Arc. "That," said General C., pointing to the little figure on horseback, "is French! And the French have fought this war chivalrously — not against monuments, against women and children and old people, but as soldiers against soldiers!"

The Latin is sometimes cruel — he has within him the capacity for cruelty — and the history of

Latin peoples is stained here and there with ferocity. But the Latin has never organized cruelty methodically, has never elevated terrorization into a principle of warfare, a weapon of statecraft. For one thing he is too intelligent: he knows that cruelty begets reprisals, that brutality breeds hate. After Alsace the German should have known too much to try the same method in harsher forms upon Belgium and invaded France. But the barbarian learns no spiritual lessons. Persian atrocity, Saracen atrocity, Indian atrocity, Spanish atrocity — they have all failed. An enduring triumph was never won on that principle of "indispensable severity."

It is barbarism as well as the barbarian which France is fighting, and the French know it, are profoundly conscious of it, from the cool, dispassionate philosopher, like Bergson or Boutroux or Hovelaque, to the girl conductor on the tram, the dirty *poilu* in the trench. For more than a generation the French world has suffered from the fear of this new barbarian, and the time has come again, as it has come so many times before in history, for the momentous decision with the barbarian. Again as before it must come on the fields of France where the ancient curse of barbarism has been met and destroyed.

IV

The German Lesson

THE barbarian must be met on his own ground of force and efficiency, — "an eye for an eye," not with arguments or apologies, not even with numbers or wealth. The vital question for us all to-day is not how unprepared the Allies were for the onslaught of barbarism, but how far they have overcome their handicap, how thoroughly they have learned the barbarian's lesson. The varying degrees in which the different allied nations have grasped the meaning of the lesson and applied it tell us not merely their chance of survival, but also the probable outcome of the world decision. What that lesson is which Germany is teaching the world by blood and iron is a byword on men's tongues to-day: the value of it is another question.

* * *

Long before the war, Germany had published far and wide her scorn of her enemies. The Russians were an undisciplined barbarian horde; the English, stupid idlers who spent on their sport the energy that the industrious German devoted to preparing himself for world rule. As for the French, they were an amiable and amusing

people, but degenerate — fickle, feeble, rotten with disease. Germany's hate was reserved for the English, her most ignoble slurs for the French. Needless to say, Germany has not found any one of her many enemies as wholly despicable as she had imagined them to be. Her miscalculations were greatest with France. That the French people are smaller in stature than the German, that they eat less and breed less, that by temperament they are cheerful and gay and witty convinced the dull German mind that the race had become degenerate and trivial, — negligible. This habit of contemptuously attributing to other peoples vileness and degeneracy because their social ideals differ from her own is part of that lack of imagination which is the Teuton's undoing.

The courage, endurance, and high spirit displayed by the French have compelled German admiration. The French have become the most tolerable of all her enemies, and it is an open secret that for many months Germany has desired to win France away from her allies by an honorable, even advantageous peace. Meantime French prisoners are favored in the German prison camps, being accorded a treatment altogether more humane than that given the English prisoners or the Russians. But France has replied to the dishonorable advances no more than to the calumnies. One of the astonishing revelations of national psychology unfolded in the war has been the taciturnity of the French, their silent tenacity.

For nearly two generations the nation has lived in expectation of an ultimate struggle for existence with the barbarian: now that it has come with more than the feared ferocity the French have no time or energy to waste in comment. They must expel the barbarian from their home and put a limit "for an hundred years" to the menace of his barbarism.

That is in part why the clear-headed Latin has learned the German lesson faster than his allies.

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What everybody knows by this time, and in America is repeating with sickening fluency, is that Germany is "efficient," not only militarily efficient, but socially and economically efficient — which these days amounts to the same thing. Germany is "organized" both for peace and war more efficiently than any other nation in the world. The two terms that this war has driven into all men's consciousness are "efficiency" and "organization." We in America, prone to admire the sheen of tin, have bowed down in greater admiration than any other people to German "efficiency." For efficiency values in the operations of life are just the ones we are most capable of appreciating, although our government and general social organization remain as lamentably inefficient as, say, the English. But being a business people we are fitted to admire business

qualities above all others. The German army, the German state are magnificently run businesses! To some of us, however, the term "efficiency" has become nauseating because it has been associated with so much else that we loathe from the bottom of our souls. If we cannot have an "efficient" civilization without paying the price for it that Germany has paid, — the price of humanity, of beauty, the price of her soul, — let us return to the primitive inefficiency of a Sicilian village!

Germany under a highly autocratic system of government has created a social machine of unexampled and formidable efficiency. The German realized before his rivals that war had become, like all other human activities, a matter of business on a huge scale. And he had prepared not merely the special instruments of war, but also the tributary business on this scale of modern magnitude: he had converted his state into a powerful war machine. All this which is now commonplace has become more glaringly evident to us onlookers because of the lamentable failure of England and Russia especially to meet the requirements of the new business. So incapable do they seem of learning the German lesson that to some Americans the cause of the Allies is doomed already to disaster. Certainly the English and the Russians have justified many of those bitter German taunts.

It has not been so with France. The French also were caught unprepared — to their honor —

like their allies. Can a real democracy ever be prepared for war? France, suffering grievously from the first blow dealt by the enemy, looked destruction in the face before the stand at the Marne. The famous victory of the Marne, I believe, is still unknown in Germany — I have been so informed by an American who spent last winter in Germany. The battle of the Marne may not rank in history as quite the greatest battle in the history of the world. The French may exaggerate its importance as a military event. The English have certainly exaggerated the part played by their little expeditionary force of less than a hundred thousand in "saving France." That is for others to dispute. But it was without any question a great moral victory for the French of the utmost tonic value to the nation. It saved France from despair, possibly from the annihilation that follows despair. And ever since the Marne victory, French confidence and *élan* have been rapidly growing. During that bloody September week they realized that the barbarian was not invincible, the machine was not so perfect but that human will and human courage could resist it. Moreover, the machine lacked that quality of spirit which the French felt in themselves. As the months have dragged around an entire year and more in the trenches, almost contempt has grown in the mind of the French soldier for the formidable German machine. Strong as it is, it yet lacks something — that something of human

spirit without which permanent victories cannot be achieved. Its strength can be imitated. The spirit cannot be "organized."

French confidence is more than an official phrase, a mere bluff!

* * *

But — and just here lies the profound significance of it all — the French realized at once that in order to conquer the German machine they must create an equally efficient and powerful machine, which with that plus of human spirit and the inspiration of their cause would carry them over into victory. So while the English were berating the barbarian for his atrocious misconduct, advertising "business as usual," and filching what German trade they could, bungling at this and that, until they have become a spectacle to themselves, the French nation concentrated all its energies upon preparing an organization fit to meet the German organization. While General Joffre held the Germans behind the four hundred miles of trenches, France made itself over into a society organized for war — the new business kind of war which is waged in factory and railway terminal, not by gallant charges. "*Organiser*" has become in the Frenchman's vocabulary the next most popular word to "*patrie*." One implies, these days, the other.

It is said that when Germany invaded France, the French had not a ton of their chief high ex-

plosive on hand. Some of its ingredients they had been getting from Germany! France lost her coal and iron mines and her largest factories the first weeks of the war and has not regained them. Yet early in last April, according to the official announcement, France was turning out six times as much ammunition as was deemed, before the war, the maximum requirement, and would shortly turn out ten times as much, which has ere this probably been greatly exceeded. Meanwhile, by April the artillery had been increased sevenfold. In attaining these results, France has accomplished a greater marvel relatively speaking than the most boasted German efficiency. She has had to get her coal from England, her ores from Spain, her machines for making guns and shells from us. She has had to improvise shell factories and gun plants from automobile factories, electric plants, railway repair shops — from anything and everything. I visited a small tile factory that was being utilized to make hand grenades. Innumerable small shops in Paris are engaged in munition work. The amount of ammunition bought in America by France has been grossly exaggerated by the German press. Latterly, France has employed American engineers to build large munition plants in France that will become the property of the Government.

Throughout the spring the Paris newspapers appeared every morning with large headlines: "More guns! More ammunition!!" And they got

them, made them. The headlines are no longer needed, for the superiority in shell and guns rests with the French, not with the Germans, on the western front.

* * *

France, industrially crippled, has accomplished this marvel in one short year. The country has become one vast workshop for war. The Latin genius for organization on the small scale has met the German genius for organization on the large scale. The industrial transformation has been facilitated by the system of conscription over which the English have wrangled so long and so futilely to the mystery of their keener-witted allies. To the Frenchman conscription means merely the most effective method of applying patriotism, of coöperation for the common cause. France has mobilized not only her men, but her women and children, it might be said, so thoroughly have the civilian elements worked into the shops and other non-military labor. To sort out their labor and put it where it was most effective, to substitute women workers for men wherever possible, were the first steps in the huge work of social reorganization. There were no labor troubles to contend with, thanks to the conscription system and to the awakened patriotism of every element in society. France looked on aghast when her necessary supplies of coal were threatened by the strike of Welsh miners, averted

only by the personal pleadings of a popular minister! To the Latin, more disciplined and more alive to the real dangers of the situation than the Anglo-Saxon, the English attitude was simply incomprehensible. Also France has not had her efficiency so seriously threatened by the liquor problem as has England: the military authorities have taken stern measures against this danger and have carried them out firmly. So far as the army itself is concerned, the drink evil does not exist.

The manufacture of ammunition and cannon is but one element in the new warfare. France has had to feed, clothe, and maintain her armies under the same handicap, to meet all the unexpected requirements in material of the trench war. The French have rediscovered the hand grenade and developed it into the characteristic weapon of the war, have unearthed all their old mortars from the arsenals and adapted them to the trench, and created the best aerial service of all the combatants. Incidentally they have effectually protected Paris from air raids since the first months of the war by their careful aerial patrol. All this is aside from the task of putting the nation socially and economically on the war basis — in providing for the wounded, the dependent women and children, and also for a perpetual stream of refugees from Belgium and the invaded provinces, a burden that Germany has not yet had to carry.

Not all this huge work of reorganization could be done immediately with equal success. The sanitary service suffered grievously, especially at the beginning, — needed all the help that generous outsiders could give, — still needs it. The percentage of death among the wounded is too high, of those returned to the army too low. There have been wastes in other directions due to haste, inexperience, political interference, but nothing like the wastes that England has suffered from the same causes, infinitely less than we should suffer judging from the ineptitudes we displayed in our little Spanish War.

Probably France is not as well organized to-day for the war business as is Germany. Very possibly she never will be, which is not to the discredit of her people. The nation has had to do in one short year, grievously handicapped at the start, what Germany has done at her leisure during forty years. Moreover, the Latin temperament is intolerant of the mechanical, the routine, which is the glory of the German. Although the French have realized with marvelous quickness the necessity of war organization and have adapted themselves to it,—have learned the German lesson, — they are spiritually above making it the supreme ideal of national effort. Without argument they have accepted the conditions imposed upon them, but they do not regard the modern war business as the flower of human civilization.

* * *

Mere preparation, no matter how scientific and thorough, is by no means the whole of the German lesson. The first months of the war we heard too much about German preparedness, too little about German character. By this time the world is realizing that military preparation is but one manifestation of that German character, and the real danger is German character itself. According to reports in her own newspapers Germany found herself running short of war materials after the first weeks of this extraordinarily prodigal war, which exceeded even her prudent calculations. But Germany had the habit of preparation and the social machinery ready to enlarge her war product. Without advertising her situation to the world, she provided for the new requirements so abundantly that she has not yet betrayed any deficiency in material. And while she was sweeping victoriously across northern France toward Paris, with the belief that the city must fall before her big guns, nevertheless her engineers took pains to prepare the Aisne line of defense, which saved her armies from disaster and enabled them to keep their tenacious grip on Belgium and northern France. This is the real strength of Germany, the real import of the bitter lesson she is teaching the world — the habit of preparation, discipline, organization, thrift. On the specifically military side the French seem to have learned this lesson well. They have fortified the ground between the present front and Paris with line after

line of defensive works. The fields are gray with barbed wire. A few miles outside of the suburbs of Paris may be seen as complete a system of trenches as on the front, and the *képi* of the territorial digging a trench is a familiar sight almost anywhere in eastern France. It is inconceivable that any "drive" on the western front could be successful. The confidence of the French rests in part on these precautions.

Whether the French can apply the inner meaning of the German lesson, can incorporate it into their characters and transmit it to their children, is a larger question for us as well as for them, for the whole world. But their success in applying it in this war is all the more noteworthy in contrast with the failure of their two great allies, who were not invaded, not handicapped at the start, as was France. The failure of Great Britain and of Russia to master the lesson is so obvious, so lamentable, that it needs no emphasis here. France, with the brunt of invasion only a few miles from the gates of Paris, her factories and mines lost, has provided herself very largely, has supplied Serbia with ammunition, Italy with artillery, Russia, England, and Italy with aeroplanes. For many months the thirty miles of the western front held by the English was defended with the assistance of French artillery.

The Slav one expected to fail in getting his German lesson, for obvious reasons, especially because of his reactionary and corrupt bureaucracy.

But not the Anglo-Saxon! As a clever French staff officer remarked, — "The two disappointments of the war have been the Zeppelins and the English." Without making a *post mortem* on the English case, the Latin superiority is a phenomenon worth pondering. For the Anglo-Saxon, cousin to the Teuton, would supposably be the better fitted to receive the German lesson of organization and discipline. But that ideal of individual liberty, which England surely did not inherit from her Germanic ancestors, seems to have degenerated into a license that threatens her very existence as a great state. The English still talk of "muddling through somehow"! If the end of autocracy is barbarism, the end of liberty is anarchy.

The Latin has kept the mean between the two extremes. The French, having fought more desperately in their great revolution for individual freedom than any other people, seem able to recognize its necessary limits and to subordinate the individual at necessity to the salvation of the nation. In the Latin blood, however modified, there remains always the tradition of the greatest empire the world has known, which for centuries withstood the assaults of ancient barbarism. The wonderful resistance and adaptability of the French to-day is of more than sentimental importance to mankind. All the world, including their foes, pay homage to the gallantry and greatness of the French spirit in their dire struggle,

but what has not been sufficiently recognized is the significance to the future of the recovery by the Latin peoples of the leadership of civilization. We Americans who have both traditions in our blood, with many modifications, are as much concerned in this world decision as the combatants themselves.

So much has become involved in the titanic struggle, so many subordinate issues have risen to cloud the one cardinal spiritual issue at stake, that we are likely to forget it or deny that there is any. Is the world to be barbarized again or not?

* * *

This reiterated use of the term "barbarism" is not merely rhetorical nor cheap invective. It is exact. One of the Olympian jests of this world tragedy has been the passionate verbal battles over the claims of respective "*Kulturs*" to the favor of survival. Why deny that the barbarian can have a very superior form of "*Kultur*" and yet remain a barbarian in soul? These pages on the German lesson are a tribute to Germany's special contribution to the world. Social and industrial organization, systematic instead of loose ways of doing things, prudence, thrift, obedience and subordination of the individual to the state, discipline — in a word, an efficient society. It is a great lesson! No one to-day can belittle its meaning. Possibly the remote, hidden reason for all this seemingly useless bloody sacrifice in our

prosperous modern world is to teach the primary principles of the lesson. God knows that we all need it — we in America most after the Russian, and next to us the English. If the world can learn the lesson which Germany is pounding in with ruin, slaughter, and misery, — can discipline itself without becoming Teutonized, — the sacrifice is not too great. If the non-Germanic peoples cannot learn the lesson sufficiently well, then the Teuton must rule the world with "his old German God." His boasted superiority will become fact, destiny.

That is the momentous decision which is being wrought out these days in Europe with blood and tears — the relative importance to mankind of discipline and liberty. The ideal is to have both, as much of one as is consistent with the other. In this country and in England may be seen the evil of an individualism run into license — the waste, the folly of it. And in Germany may be seen the monstrous result of an idolatrous devotion to the other ideal — the man-made machine without a soul. Between the two lies the fairest road into the future, and that road, with an unerring instinct, the Latin follows.

* * *

The German lesson is not the whole truth: it is the poorer half of the truth. An undisciplined world is more in God's image than a world from which beauty, humanity, and chivalry have been

exterminated. But discipline is the primal condition of survival. Between these two poles, between its body and its soul, mankind must struggle as it has always struggled from the beginning of time. . . .

When I looked on the sensitive, suffering faces of Frenchwomen in their mourning, the wistful eyes of crippled youths, the limp forms of wounded men, the tense, bent figures of dirty *poilus* in their muddy trenches, I knew that through their souls and bodies was passing the full agony of this struggle.

V

The Faith of the French

I DO not mean religious faith, although that too has been evoked, reaffirmed by the trials and griefs of the war, but I mean faith in themselves, in their cause, in life. The unshakable faith of the French is the one most exhilarating, abiding impression that the visitor takes from France these days. It is so universal, so pervasive, so contagious that he too becomes irresistibly convinced, no matter how dark the present may be, how many victories German arms may win, that the ultimate triumph of the cause is merely deferred.

There has never been the slightest panic in France, not during the mobilization when white-faced men and women realized that the dreaded hour had struck, not even in those days of suspense when the public began to realize that the first reports of French victories in Alsace were deceptive and that the enemy was almost at the gates of Paris. A million or so people left the city with the Government in order to escape the expected siege, but there was no panic, not even among the wretched creatures driven from their homes in the provinces before the blast of the German cyclone.

Ever since the battle of the Marne the tide of confidence has been steadily rising, in spite of the tedious disappointments of trench warfare, the small gains of ground, the steady toll of lives, in spite of reverses in Galicia and Poland and the mistakes in the Dardanelles, in spite of English sluggishness and Russian weakness. Each reverse has been courageously accepted, analyzed, and found not decisive, merely temporary. Victory must come to the ones who can endure to the end, and the French know now that they can endure. "We can do it all alone, if we have to!" Again, "The Germans know that they are beaten already: they know it in Berlin as well as we do."

This confidence is based on realities — first on the success with which France has learned the German lesson and completely reorganized her life for the business of war. "We were not ready last August — but we are now." Her machine is growing stronger in spite of the daily waste of life, while the German machine is weakening steadily.

* * *

The farther one gets into the military zone, the more fervent and evident is this confidence, until on the front it is an irresistible conviction that inspires men and officers alike. Even a novice like myself began to understand why the army is sure of ultimate victory, and the longer one stays at the front the more this faith of the French seems justified. In the first place, they have so well got

that German lesson! The supply of shell and gun is so abundant, also of fresh troops in reserve thanks to "Papa" Joffre's frugality with human lives; the first, second, third lines — on *ad infinitum* to Paris — are so carefully fortified, so alertly held against any "drive"! And the troops are so fit! They have made themselves at home in their new camping life behind the lines of dugouts and caves; they have become gnomes, woodsmen, cavemen, taking on the earth colors of the primitive world to which they have been forced to return in order to free the soil of their country. Then one sees the steady creeping forward of the front itself, not much as it looks on a small-scale map, but as the officers point out the blasted woods, or the brow of a hill over which the trenches have been slowly pushed metre by metre throughout the interminable weeks of constant struggle, one sees that gradually the French have got the upper hand, the commanding positions in long stretches of the trench wall. They are on the hills, their artillery commands the level fields before them. It is like the struggle between two titanic wrestlers who have swayed back and forth over the same ground so long that the spectator can see no advance for either. But one wrestler knows that the inches gained from his adversary count, that the body in his grasp is growing weaker, that the collapse will come soon — with a rush. He cannot tell fully why he feels this superiority, but he knows that his adversary is weakening.

Perhaps a colonel on the front will tell you with elation, — "We know that the Boches across the way are discouraged, because our prisoners say so, — we take prisoners more easily than we did, — and they are all mixed up in their formations. We know that they have to drive their men to the job, that the lines about here are stripped as bare as they dare keep them. There used to be a lot of reserve troops behind their lines, but our aviators say there are n't any in X—— any more! And they are n't as free with their *obus* as they used to be, and they are 'old nightingales,' not first quality." Perhaps the staff officers will smile, knowing that the enemy is massing his forces elsewhere on the long front, but this trick of rapid change is becoming harder to perform, and more exhausting. At any rate, the plain *poilus* in the front trenches are instinctively sure: "We'll have 'em now soon!" They have watched that grim gray wall opposite so long that, like animals, they can feel what is going on there on the other side.

* * *

At staff headquarters in a more contained, reserved way there is the same air of vital confidence. "Have you seen the new pump?" the general asked me. "We are pumping good water all over this sector into the front trenches, too. . . . Oh, we are *bien installé!* . . . It may be another year, two, perhaps more, but the end is certain. There is one man in the trenches, another

just behind in reserve, still another resting somewhere in the woods for his week off, and more, all the men we want back in the *dépôts!*" And he turns the talk to the good health of his men, their fine spirit. For one of the human, lovable qualities of the officers whom I met is that they prefer to talk about the comfort, the *morale*, the *esprit*, of their men to discussing "operations."

Just here I see where the French have risen above the machine idea of the German lesson. There is a something plus, over and above "preparation," "organization," "efficiency," which the Latin has and on which his confidence in ultimate victory largely rests. That is his belief in the individual, his reliance on the strength of the individual's spirit. To the French officer this seems the all-important factor in the army: military force depends ultimately upon the *esprit* of the individual which creates the *morale* of the whole. Of course, the army must be equipped in the modern way and fought in the modern way with all the resources of science, with aeroplanes, bombs, motor transport, and heavy artillery. But without the full devotion of the individual, without the coöperation of his *esprit*, the army would be a dead machine, especially in this nerve-rending endurance contest of the trenches. Here is the Latin idea, which is absolutely opposed to the German machine theory of war.

The German staff has done marvels with its machine. It hurls armies over the map of Europe

on its splendid railways, with a perfected system of organization. But it disregards the individual. The men are merely so many fighting units, to be kept sound and well and cured as rapidly as possible when wounded in order to get them back into the ranks. The regiments are often reorganized and combined with other units, German companies even mixed in with Austrian units. They are handled like pieces of a machine. Each individual, supposably having been "standardized," as we say in building, is an interchangeable bit of mechanism, equally useful wherever placed. But the human being cannot be used that way with the best effects. He is an individual, he has a soul. The results that can be got from him beyond the surface result of massed force will depend on whether that soul can be evoked to its full strength. All this the French know, and their greatest source of confidence is in the individual intelligence, individual *esprit* of the millions of units, the *morale* with which they are filled.

The French soldier is not as exacting as the English or German soldier about his uniform. Give him a little *képi* to pull over his shock of black hair and he feels himself in soldier dress. Blue coat or gray, old red breeches or linen ones, he does not care. Even on the front one sees the most nondescript collection of uniforms, in striking contrast with the admirable *feld grau* uniform in which the German soldier is equipped. A

French officer has stated the difference of ideals very clearly: —

"The external appearance, the uniform of the soldier, have their importance, of course, but we put far above them the moral worth of the soldier. We excuse the torn coat, the untidy trousers, if the heart is right. To make sure of that we get close to the man. We do not burden him with drill, but every day we question him, talk with him. It's harder, takes more time, is a delicate matter. Our control of the men does not depend so much on the order or disorder of the knapsack — it is wholly psychical. Our discipline is not so much the relation of superior to inferior — it is the common submission to necessary rules and military orders. One must obey because one has a conscience, a sense of duty, not from fear. All our severity, our determination, lie in that — to develop in the man his sense of duty, to exalt his faith which will make him sacrifice himself readily at the word of command. . . . Our method gets better results than the drill method. We do not have to drive the men into battle with a revolver in the hand."

With the Latin it is always the individual that counts. Illustration of the results of the method described — of cultivating the spirit of sacrifice — has been given over and over again in the desperate trench fighting of the past year. A wonderful collection of heroic tales could be made from the daily newspapers, showing the qualities

of initiative and devotion in the common soldier, who in the Latin conception of the word remains a human being with a soul. An officer remarked to me, "We cannot have our men come from the trenches glum and downcast—a Frenchman must laugh and joke or something is wrong with him. So we started these vaudevilles behind the lines, and sports." Instead of more drill they give their men "shows," so that they may laugh and forget the horrors of the trench. Good psychology!

* * *

The civilian shines through every French soldier — the civilian who is a human being like you or me, with the same human needs. The officers chat and joke familiarly with their men. Comradeship is substituted for tyranny. France, one comprehends, is a real democracy, and still takes the ideal of equality seriously. When I asked an officer at Rheims why he had not had a day's leave in ten months while English officers went home on leave, he said, with a shrug, — "France is a republic: our men must get their leaves first."

The machine system gives startling results — in a short campaign. But when it comes to an endurance contest, to the long, long strains of trench warfare, something other than drill and organization is necessary, something that will rouse the human being to the last atom of effort that he has in him. When men must stand up

to their waists in icy water, live in the inferno of constant bombardment, not for hours and days, but for weeks and months, something other than discipline is needed to keep them sufficiently alive to be of use. Doctors tell how willingly, unquestioningly, the wounded go back to the hell they have escaped, — not once, but twice, three times. To evoke the capacity for heroism in the individual soldier has been the triumph of the Latin system.

The faith of the French rests justly on their heroic resolution, their ability to endure as individuals, more than on the lesson learned of preparation and organization.

* * *

Faith is a belief in the evidence of things unseen. French faith is of many kinds, not purely material, not military. They believe so profoundly in the perfect justice and high importance of their cause that it would seem as if they counted upon the cause alone to win the victory. No nation, they say, ever spent itself in a better cause. Victims of an unprovoked attack, unprepared, which is the best evidence of peaceable will, witnesses of the outrage of a neighbor people, bleeding from the wounds of their own country, — what better cause for war could men have? And the Latin intelligence of the French enables them from the humblest to the highest to perceive the universality of the principles for

which they are called upon to die. It is no selfish, not even a merely national, cause — it is the cause of nothing less than humanity in which they fight.

The philosopher Bergson expressed this sublime confidence in the cause thus (I give the substance of his words from memory): "Not all wars can be avoided — perhaps nine out of ten can. But this one, no! For it is a war of principles. It will be a long war because the enemy is strong and we were unprepared. But we can wait the end confident in the result. The Germans have created a false belief, a wrong idea, and have carried that idea into action with extraordinary thoroughness. But the belief rests upon error. When the day comes that they meet reverses, when their idol of force no longer works miracles for them, then they will collapse, from within. There will be a general breakdown of personality from realizing the falsity of their idea. There lies our victory."

The philosopher's belief is based on the faith that the principles of justice, of law, of humanity are stronger, more enduring than any organization of force no matter how efficient, for this is a moral world. And the individual or nation who relies upon might to enforce wrong must in the end, perceiving the irrationality of his world, collapse. The grinding of the mill may be heartbreakingly slow, but the grist is as sure as life itself.

Similarly, the statesman Hanotaux has expressed "The Moral Victory": "It is the noblest, the highest of causes which has been submitted to the arbitrament of arms. Its grandeur justifies the terrible extent of the drama and the immense sacrifices it imposes. The material results of victory will be immense, the moral results will be even greater. . . . Moral forces are superior to physical forces, and in spite of all they will have the last word. . . . Our youth has gone to the front in the serene conviction that it was fighting not only for the *patrie*, but for humanity, that this war was a sort of crusade, that they could claim place beside St. Louis and Jeanne d'Arc."

It is that heroic consciousness of a righteous martyrdom that I read on the faces of the black-robed women in the street, too proud for tears; in the silent figures on the hospital beds, suffering without protest an agony too deep for words. And when I encountered a file of soldiers in the muddy trenches, flattening themselves out against the earth walls to let me pass, carrying pails of soup to the comrades up front, or sitting motionless beside their burrows along the trench wall, their hands clasping their rifles, — dirty, grimed, and bearded, — I saw the same thing in their tired eyes, their drawn faces. Mute martyrs in the cause of humanity, in *my* cause, they were giving their lives for others, for *me*, not merely that the German might be driven from France, but that

justice and honor and peace between men might prevail in the world!

* * *

Because the French people are inspired with the grandeur and the moral significance of their cause, they cannot understand a certain cynical attitude of mind, well illustrated by a former Senator of the United States, who has been high in the councils of the defunct Progressive Party. After spending ten days in Paris last spring, he remarked at a luncheon given him by some distinguished Frenchmen, — "Don't tell me about the justice of your cause or about the atrocities. I am not interested in that. What I want to know is, who is going to win!" Who is going to win! There spoke the barbarian mind. The barbarian mind cannot comprehend that the winning itself in a world cause is inextricably involved in the justice and worth of the cause.

For the same reason the French people have been puzzled by the sort of neutrality preached and practiced at Washington since the outbreak of the war. It is plain enough that neither France nor England desires to have the United States go to war with Germany. We can help them better as a huge supply house than as an ally, much as that might offend our vanity. The French appreciate also our President's desire to keep his country at peace. They are a peace-

loving people and know the frightful costs of war. But they cannot understand a neutrality that avoids committing itself upon a moral issue such as was presented to the world in Belgium, in the sinking of the Lusitania. And in spite of the strict censorship, which for obvious reasons has muzzled the French press in its comment upon our diplomacy with Germany, occasionally flashes of a biting scorn of the Wilson neutrality have appeared in print, as the following from Hanotaux: "We should be wanting truly in frankness toward our great sister republic if we left her in the belief that this series of documents, of a tone particularly friendly and affectionate, addressed to the German Government after such acts as theirs, had not occasioned in France a certain surprise. . . . Up to this time the Allies, who have not, God be praised, compromised or even menaced the life of any neutral, of any American, have not received the twentieth part of these friendly terms that the German Government has brought forth by its implacable acts. . . . What the world awaits from President Wilson is not merely a note, it is a verdict. What do neutral peoples, what does the American Government, what does President Wilson think of the German doctrine, — 'Necessity knows no law — the end justifies the means'? . . . Every Government that acts or speaks at the present hour decides the nature of the real peace, whether it will be an affirmation

of those eternal principles that are alone capable of directing humanity toward its sacred end."

To our eternal shame as a nation our Government has evaded, up to this hour, pronouncing the expected verdict, has preferred to quibble and define, in its vain attempt to hold the barbarian to a "strict accountability" — whatever that may mean. France does not want our army or our navy, not even our money and our factories, except on business terms, but she has looked in vain for our affirmation as a nation of our belief in her great cause, which should be our own cause — the cause of all free peoples.

* * *

What a timid and verbal interpretation of neutrality has prevented our Government from affirming, the American people, let us be thankful, have done generously, abundantly. They have pronounced a not uncertain verdict, and they have followed this moral verdict with countless acts of sympathy. The cause of France, the faith of the French, have roused the chivalry of the best Americans. Our youths are fighting in the trenches, our doctors and nurses are giving their services, our money is helping to stanch the wounds of France. As a people we too have affirmed our faith in the cause and are doing generously, spontaneously, as is our wont, what we can to win that cause for the world. The splendid hospital of the American Ambulance at Neuilly,

equipped and operated on the generous American scale, is the real monument to the beliefs, the hopes, the faith of the American people.

In that modification of the Anglo-Saxon tradition which America is fast evolving, there is a subtle sympathy and likeness with the Latin, which this crisis has brought into evidence. We are less English than French in spirit, in our ideal of culture, of life.

VI

The New France

"THIS is a return for a new departure!" the Italian poet cried to his people at Quarto when they were still hesitating between the paths of a prudent neutrality and intervention in the world decision. Probably in the poet's thought there was more of concrete ambition for "national aspirations" than of spiritual rebirth. But for the French nation it is the spiritual rebirth alone that has any meaning. No material enlargement of France has ever been seriously contemplated. The acquisition of Alsace can hardly be termed conquest, and whatever hopes of indemnity or other material advantages the French may have permitted themselves to dream of must fade as the financial burden of all Europe mounts ever higher. Even the recovery of Alsace, according to those best able to judge, — in spite of German assertions, — would never have roused France to an aggressive war. Conquest, material growth, is not an active principle in the French character. How often I have heard this thought on French lips, — "We want to be let alone, to be free to live our lives as we think best, to develop our

own institutions, — that is what we are fighting for!" For forty years the nation has lived under the fear of invasion, a black cloud always more or less threatening on the frontier, and when the day of mobilization came every Frenchman knew instinctively what it meant — the long-expected fight for national existence. And the hope that sustains the people in their blackest moments is the hope of ending the thing forever. "Our children and our children's children will not have to endure what we suffer. It will be a better world because of our sacrifice."

The conquest that France will achieve is the conquest of herself, and the fruits of that she has already attained in a marvelous measure. The reality of a new France is felt to-day by every Frenchman and is aboundingly obvious to the stranger visiting the country he once knew in her soft hours of peace. To be sure, intelligent French people say to you, when you comment on the fact, "But we were always really like this at bottom, serious and moral and courageous, only you did not see the real France." Pardonable pride! The French themselves did not know it. As so often with individual souls, it took the fierce fire of prolonged trial to evoke the true national character, to bring once more to the surface ancient and forgotten racial virtues, to brighten qualities that had become dim in the petty occupations of prosperity.

After I had been in France a short time, noth-

ing seemed falser to me than the pessimistic assertions of certain German-Americans and faint-hearted other Americans, that whatever the outcome of the world war France was "done for," "exhausted," "ruined," must sink to the level of a third-rate power, and so forth. Nor can I believe the words of those saddened sympathizers and helpers in the ambulances and hospitals, that "France is proudly bleeding to death." Her wounds have been frightful, and through them is still gushing much of the best blood of the nation. Her bereavement has been enormous, but not irreparable. Once a real peace achieved, the triumph of the cause, and I venture to predict that France will give an astonishing spectacle of rapid recovery, materially and humanly. For the New France is already a fact, not a faith.

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Evidence of this rebirth is naturally difficult to make concrete as with all spiritual quality. It is not merely the solidarity of the nation, the fervent patriotism, the readiness for every sacrifice, which are qualities more or less true of all the warring nations, especially of Germany. It is more than the perpetual Sunday calm along the rue de la Paix, the absence of that parasitic frivolity with which Paris — a small part of Paris — entertained the world. It is not simply that French people have become serious, silent, determined, with set wills to endure and to win

— for that moral tenacity may relax after the crisis has passed. It is all these and much more which I shall try to express that has revealed a new France.

To start with some prosaic proofs of the new life, I will take the liquor question, a test of social vitality. It is significant to examine how the different belligerent nations have treated this problem, which becomes acute whenever it is necessary to call upon all national reserves in a crisis. Turkey, Italy, and Germany apparently have no liquor problem; at least the war has not called attention to it. Russia, whose peasantry was notoriously cursed with drunkenness, eradicated the evil, ostensibly, by one arbitrary ukase, though, if persistent reports from the eastern war region are true, her great reform has not yet reached her officers. England has played feebly with the question from the beginning when the ravages of drink among the working population — what every visitor to England had known — became painfully evident to the Government in its efforts to mobilize war industries and increase production. Various minor restrictions on the liquor traffic have been imposed, but nothing that has reached to the roots of the matter — probably because of the powerful liquor interest in Parliament as much as from the Englishman's fetish of individual liberty. Although the direct handicap of drunken workmen did not affect France as it did England, the French

authorities quickly realized the indirect menace of alcoholism and have taken real measures to combat it. Absinthe has been abolished. For the army — and that includes practically all the younger and abler men — the danger has been minimized by the strict enforcement of regulations as to hours and the non-alcoholic nature of drinks permitted, which are posted conspicuously in all cafés and drinking-places and which are carefully observed, as any one who tries to order liquor in company with a man in uniform will quickly find out! I never saw a soldier or an officer in the least degree under the influence of liquor while I was in France, either at the front or outside the military zone, and very few workingmen. Not content with the control of liquor in the army, the French have seriously attacked the whole problem, which in France centers in the right of the fruit-grower to distill brandy, — an ancient custom that in certain provinces has resulted in great abuses. Legislation against the *bouilleurs de crue* is one inevitable outcome of the awakened sense of social responsibility in France.

Connected with the liquor evil is the birth-rate question, to which since the war the attention of all serious-minded people has been drawn. The French Academy of Sciences has undertaken an elaborate series of investigations into the relations between the birth-rate and the consumption of alcohol, which would seem to show that there is cause and effect between the excessive

use of alcohol and a declining birth-rate. This will undoubtedly tend to create a popular sentiment favorable to restrictive liquor legislation, specifically to abolishing the right to distill spirits. But what is of more real significance is the changing sentiment among the French in favor of larger families. Due, no doubt, directly to the necessities of a draining war, it is also an expression of those deeper experiences that trial has brought. The French have always prized family life, and French family life is, perhaps, the best type of the social bond that the world knows. Under the stress of widespread bereavement the French are realizing that the base of the family is not love between the sexes, but the existence of children. They want children, not only to take the place of their men sacrificed, but as symbols of that greater love for the race that the war has evoked. Although the crudity of the "war-bride" method of increasing the population is not evident in France, every working-girl wears the medallion of some "hero" on her breast. Girls say frankly that they want children. The Latin will never accept the German principle of indiscriminate breeding. As in every other aspect of life, the Latin emphasizes the individual, the personal; but an awakened patriotism and pride of race, a deepened sense of the real values of life will lead to a greater devotion to the family ideal.

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To shift to the political life of France, the history of the republic has been tempestuous in the past. There has been a succession of *coups d'état*, plots, and scandals. One political *cause célèbre* has followed another — the Boulanger, the Dreyfus, and quite lately the Caillaux. The wide publicity which these political scandals have had is due partly to the Latin love of excitement, also to the Latin frankness about washing dirty political linen in public. To the foreigner it has seemed strange that a republic could endure with such abysses of intrigue and personal corruption beneath its political life as have been shown in the Panama and Dreyfus scandals. The Germans probably have been misled by them into considering the French nation wholly despicable and degenerate. But France has not only endured in spite of these rotten spots, but her republicanism has grown stronger. Americans experienced in their own sordid politics should understand how uncharacteristic of the real citizenship of a democracy politicians can be. The real France has never taken with entire seriousness the machinations of "those rats in the Chamber." These "rats" were quite active during the first months of the war. Aside from the incompetence of the first war ministry, which kept the public in ignorance of the danger so completely that the enemy was at Soissons before Paris was aware that the French army was being driven back, and all the blunders

of the raid into Alsace, France had its sinister political menace in Joseph Caillaux, who it has been rumored plotted a disgraceful peace with Germany before the battle of the Marne. Caillaux, when his creature, the grafting paymaster-general, was exposed, found it wise to go to South America. An able and on the whole a competent ministry was placed in power.

When Caillaux returned last spring, rumors of legislative unrest and plotting against the Joffre-Millerand control of the army began once more. Outwardly it was an attempt of party leaders in the Chamber to gain greater legislative control of the conduct of the war, ostensibly for the improvement of bureaucratic methods, as in the sanitary service, which was notably deficient. But beneath this agitation were the dangerous forces of political France seeking to oust Joffre, and there lay the menace that a political clique might get control of the army. This agitation, however, did not disturb the public. As one Frenchman put it, "If those rats get too active, Gallieni will take them out and shoot them. France is behind the army, and the people will not tolerate legislative interference with it." The political unrest has at last resulted in a new and larger cabinet, admittedly the most representative body that France could have. The danger of political interference has passed without resort to summary methods. It is a triumph of democracy. France will fight the war to an

end under constitutional government, a much more difficult task than Germany's. Obviously, as may be seen in England, parliamentary government is a great hindrance to a nation in the abnormal state of war. Free societies have this handicap to contend with when they fight an autocratic machine. To maintain her republican government without scandals throughout the war will be a political triumph for France, indicative of the new spirit that has entered into the nation. The seriousness of the present situation has sobered all men and has suppressed the politicians by the mere weight of responsibility. The New France emerging from the trial of war can profit by this experience to purge her political life of the scandalous elements in it.

Italy has closed her Parliament and relapsed temporarily into autocracy. England and France are struggling to maintain popular government as we did through the Civil War.

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Much has been said of the heroic spirit of the French nation under the tragedy of the war. Too much could not be said. The war has evoked patriotism among all the peoples engaged, but with the French there is a peculiar idealistic passion of tenderness for the *patrie* which impresses every observer who has had the good fortune to see the nation at war. I shall not linger long on these familiar, inspiring aspects of love for coun-

try that the war has called forth from all classes. The ideal spirit of French youth has been illustrated in some letters given to the public by the novelist, Henry Bordeaux, called "Two Heroes." They relate the personal experiences of two youths, one twenty, the other twenty-one, whose baptism of fire came in the battle of the Marne. They grew old fast under the ordeal of battle and of responsibility for the lives of their men; their letters home show a loftiness of spirit, a sense of self-forgetfulness, of devotion to the cause, that is sublime, poignant — and typical. In every rank of society the same immense devotion, the same utter renouncement of selfish thought can be felt. A spirit of ideal sacrifice has spread throughout the nation, making France proud, heroic, confident. Such a spirit must be a benediction for generations to come.

The common effort, the universal grief, has drawn all French people so close together that social and party differences have disappeared. The French priest has become once more the heroic leader of his people, fighting by their side in the trenches. The scholars, the poets, the artists have all done their part, — the nuns, the aristocrats, the working-people theirs. While England has been harassed with strikes and class recriminations, France has never known in her entire history such absolute social harmony and unity, such universal and concentrated will.

This spirit of "sacred union" embraces the women who are doing men's tasks, the rich who are surrendering their good American securities to the Government in exchange for national defense bonds, the poor who are bringing their little hordes of gold to the Bank of France to swell the gold reserve. I wish that every American might stand in the court of the Bank of France and watch that file of women and old men depositing their gold — the only absolute security against want they have! That is faith made evident, and love.

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In looking over the bulky file of French newspapers, illustrated weeklies, and pamphlets on the war, which I brought back with me, I am struck by the fact that the outstanding characteristic of all this comment on the great war from journalist to statesman and publicist is not denunciation of the barbarian. Denunciation plays a singularly small part in the French reaction to their suffering. References to Germans and Germany are usually of a psychological or humorous character, illustrating the grotesque and antipathetic aspects in which the Teuton presents himself to the Latin mind. That part which grieving and denunciation have played in English comment, the gross and apoplectic hate of the German press, is taken by lyrical enthusiasm for heroism. The newspapers,

sure pulse of popular appetite, are filled daily with stories of sacrifice, gallantry, heroism. This is the aspect of the sordid bloody war that the French spirit feeds on. It is a fresh manifestation of an old national trait — the love of chivalry. Some day, doubtless, these splendid tales of individual heroism, of soldierly and civilian sacrifice, will be gathered together to make the laurel wreath of the New France. I could fill a volume with those I have read and heard. And I like to think that while Germany went wild over the torpedoing of the Lusitania, — even dared to celebrate it in America, — while the Zeppelin raids arouse her patriotic enthusiasm, the French gloat over the story of the private who crawled out of the trench and hunted for two days without food or water for his wounded officer. The love of the *beau geste* is an ineradicable trait of French character. It has had a bountiful satisfaction in this war.

"We have fought a chivalrous war," General C. exclaimed, pointing to the little figure of Jeanne d'Arc. The same general ordered that the government dole of a franc and a half a day be paid to those Alsatian women whose husbands were fighting in the German army. "They are French women: it is not their fault that their husbands are fighting against France!" And the deathless touch of all, which will be remembered in the world long after the destruction wrought to the cathedral of Rheims, is the picture of French

saving German wounded in the burning church — fired by German shells!

The *beau geste*, the beautiful act, which ennobles all men, not merely the doer of the deed, — that is what France is giving the world. The image of men who are more than efficient and strong and physically courageous, of men who are filled with a divine spirit of sacrifice and devotion. Truly supermen. .

Chivalry was a trait of the Old France as it is of the New. It has fallen somewhat into disrepute of late years with the rise of the comfort and efficiency standards. Nowhere else on the broad battlefields of Europe has it revived, to redeem the horror of war, so shiningly as in the New France.

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Another aspect of French character which is both old and new is the quality of humorous "sportsmanship" the French have displayed. When Germany's crack aviator made a daily visit to Paris, dropping bombs, in the afternoon during the early weeks of the war, the Parisians took his arrival as a spectacle and thronged the boulevards to watch him and applaud. When at last he was shot through the head, the French press lamented his loss with genuine appreciation of his nerve and his skill. A young cavalry officer at the front told me this story: One of the younger officers of his regiment, to encourage his men, had

offered rewards for German shoulder straps, that is, prisoners. Two simple peasants, misunderstanding his words, proudly brought in a couple of pairs of German ears strung on a string like game. The officer, brooding over the incident, resolved to explain and apologize to the enemy. Putting his handkerchief on the point of his sword, he crawled out of the trench and advanced across the field of death between the lines.

Tales from the trenches by the hundreds prove that the French have not lost the sparkle of wit even under the dreary conditions of trench-fighting. When Italy joined the Allies, some soldiers of a front-line trench hoisted the placard, — "Macaroni mit uns!" Again, when boasting placards of German successes in Galicia were displayed, the French *poilus* retorted, — "You lie. You have taken ten thousand officers and ten millions of troops." When in a German military prison the keepers boasted of their recent successes on the western front, the French prisoners began to sing the *Marseillaise* to the astonishment of their German guards, "because," as they explained, "we know if you have killed all those French soldiers, you must have lost at least four times as many!"

The barbarian misread the Gallic love of wit and laughter. To joke and quip seemed to him beneath the dignity of men. It is, rather, the safety-valve of a highly intelligent people — the

outlet for their ironic perceptions of life. The most amusing songs of the war that I have heard were given by the *poilus* on a little stage near Commercy while the cannon thundered a few miles away. This ability to turn upon himself and see his life in a humorous light is an invaluable quality of the French soldier. So, too, is his love of handicraft which finds many ingenious expressions even in the trenches. The French soldier is always a civilian, with a love of neatly arranged gardens and terraces, and he lays out a *potager* in the curve of a shell-swept hillside, or a neat flower garden in the crumbled walls of a village house. He makes rings from the aluminum found in German shell-caps, carves the doorposts of his stone dugout, or likenesses of his officers on beam-ends, as I saw in a colonel's quarters in the Bois-le-Prêtre.

The French soldier remains, even in this bloodiest of wars, always a civilian, a man, capable of laughter and tears, of heroic heights, of chivalrous sacrifices, — with the soul's image of what manhood requires, with the vision of a state of free individual men like himself.

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The New France is inspired with qualities of Old France, qualities which I call Latin, which have emerged into high relief under grief and suffering and effort. It is above all gallant and high-minded. The wounded Frenchman never

complains or whimpers. "*C'est la guerre — que voulez-vous!*" To the surgeon who has operated on him, — "*Merci, mon major.*" And they lie legless or armless, perhaps with running sores, a smile on the face in answer to the sympathetic word, in long hospital rows. . . .

The fundamental element in this New France is the gravity, the seriousness of it. Of all the warring peoples the French seem to realize most clearly what it all means, what it is for, and the deep import of the decision not merely to them, but to the whole world. They are fighting, not for territory, but for principles. Peace must be not a rearrangement of maps, but of men's ideas, of men's wills. They are the conscious protagonists of a long tradition of ideals that have once more been put in jeopardy. It is the character of this human world of ours which they are struggling to mould, and like actors in a Greek tragedy they are suitably impressed with the gravity of the issue in their hands.

The New France has been born in the travail of the monstrous desolation of trench-land that stretches, scabby with shell-holes, leprous with gray wire, pitted with countless graves, scarred with crumbled villages for four hundred miles across the fair fields of *la douce France.* In this savage desert, inhumanly silent except for the shrieking of shells, for now more than a year's time France has struggled with the incarnated spirit of evil, rearing its head again, armed with

all the enginery of modern science. The little, dirty-bearded soldiers squat there in their burrows, white-faced, tense, silent, waiting, watching, month after month, or plunge over their walls to give their lives on that death-field outside. They are the simple martyrs of the New France.

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France has learned her German lesson; has reorganized her life to make it tell effectively for her task, has reorganized her inner life, discarding frivolity and waste. She has found herself in the fire. France is not "done for," as my German-American friends so pityingly deem. Bleeding from her terrible wounds, she is stronger to-day than ever before, — stronger in will, in spirit, in courage, the things that count in the long, long run even in the winning of wars. Technically minded soldiers may judge that "Germany can't be beaten." But the French know in their souls that she can be, that she is beaten to-day! In this greatest of world's decisions it is the spirit of the Latin that triumphs again — the sanest, suavest, noblest tradition that the earth has ever known, under which men may work out their mysterious destiny.

PART THREE . . AMERICA

Part Three — America

I

What Does It Mean to Us?

I WENT from the French front back to America. The steamer slipped down the Gironde between green vineyards, past peaceful villages, a whole universe distant from that grim, gray trench-land where the French army was holding the invader in Titan grip, stole cautiously into the Bay of Biscay at nightfall to escape prowling submarines, and began to roll in the Atlantic surges, part of those "three thousand miles of cool sea-water" on which our President so complacently relies as a nonconductor of warfare. I was homeward bound to America, the land of Peace, after four months spent in "war-ridden Europe" — to that homeland stranger somehow than the war lands, where my countrymen were protesting to both belligerents and making money, manufacturing war supplies and blowing up factories, talking "peace" and "preparedness" in the same breath; also — and God be thanked for that! — helping to feed the starving Belgians, sending men, money, and sympathy to the French. As the old steamer settled into her fourteen-knot gait, the submarines

ceased to be of more than conversational concern, and I began to ask myself, — "What does it all mean to us, this bloody sacrifice of world war, — to us, strong, rich, peaceful, confident Americans?"

For in spite of a curious indifference among many Americans to the outcome, so long as it did not get us into trouble with either party, betrayed by personal letters and press articles which I had received, I was profoundly convinced that the issues of the world tragedy were momentous to us too. "This European butchery means nothing," said one friend, who supplies editorial comment for a most widely read American weekly, "except a lot of poverty, a lot of cripples, and a lot of sodden hate in the hearts of the people engaged. Europe will not be changed appreciably as a result of the war!" Our pacifist ex-Secretary of State, I remember, wrote Baron d'Estournelles de Constant inquiring what the French were fighting for, implying that to the reasonable onlooker there was no clear issue involved in the whole business, merely the passions of misguided patriotism. The well-meaning agitation for peace, which as I write has been lifted into the grotesque by the Ford peace ship, is based largely on this inability to realize the reality of the issue between the belligerents. And there is our national attitude of strict neutrality, which fairly represents the evasive mind of many Americans. Happily, they seem to say to themselves, "This

war is not our affair." We were warned by Washington to keep clear of European "quarrels," and wisely we covered our retreat at The Hague by inserting that little clause which relieved us from all real responsibility for the observance of the conventions. Excuse for cowardice and blindness of vision! Such Americans like to think that as a nation we have no more concern in the present war than a peaceable family in one house has with the domestic upheavals of an unfortunate family in the next house. The part of prudence is to ignore all evidences of unpleasantness, to profess good offices, and to keep on friendly terms with all the belligerents.

The impression that such an attitude makes on the American in Europe is painful, whether it be expressed in personal letters, in newspapers and magazines, or in diplomatic "notes." He becomes impatient with the provincialism of his own people, ashamed of their transparent selfishness, astonished that human values should have got so fatally distorted in our fat, comfortable world. To the European, American neutrality has become a matter of public indifference, of private contempt. Inspired with the lofty ambition of playing the rôle of mediator in the world war, President Wilson has lost his chance of influencing the decision toward which Europe is bloodily fighting its way. At that great peace conference which every European has perpetually in mind, America will be ignored. Only those

who have shared the bloody sacrifice — at least have had the courage to declare their beliefs — will penetrate its inner councils. We have had our reward — money and safety. It is not fantastic even to expect that the conquerors might under certain circumstances say to the conquered, "Take your losses from the Americans: they alone have made money out of our common woe!"

No, ours has not been the *beau geste* as a nation. Nor can the American take comfort in the thought that Washington diplomacy does not fairly represent the sentiment of our people. As the weeks slip past, it is only too evident that our President has interpreted exactly the national will. The farther west one travels the colder is the American heart, and duller the American vision. The numerical center of the United States is somewhere in the Mississippi Valley. Europe gave Chicago, in her distress after the great fire, eighty cents per person; Chicago has given Belgium and France seven cents per Chicagoan. Not a single Chicago bank appears on the list of subscribers to the Anglo-French loan, — very few banks anywhere west of the Alleghanies. "It is not our quarrel; we are not concerned except to get our money for the goods we sell them!"

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But are we not concerned? I asked myself as the old steamer throbbed wheezily westward.

Beneath the deck in the ship's strong room there were thick bundles of American bonds, millions of them, part of the big American mortgage that Europe has been obliged to sell back to us. They represent European savings, hopes of tranquil old age, girls' *dots*, boys' education and start in life. The American mortgage is being lifted rapidly. The stocks and bonds were going home to pay for the heavy cargoes of foodstuffs and ammunition and clothes which we had been shipping to Europe. The savings of the thrifty French were going to us, who were too rich already. The French were bleeding their thrift into our bulging pockets, selling their investments for shells and guns and barbed wire which would not keep old age warm, marry their girls, or start their boys in life. They were doing it freely, proudly, for the salvation of their *patrie*, which they love as the supreme part of themselves. And to us what did all this sacrifice mean? Oh, that we were growing richer day by day while the war lasted; "dollar exchange" was coming nearer; we were fast getting "rotten with money," as a genial young coal merchant who had the deck chair next mine remarked affably. Yes, the war meant that to us surely, — we were fast raking in most of the gold that Europe has been forced to throw on the table of international finance, the savings, the *dots*, the stakes of her next generation. The number of lean-faced American business men, war brokers, on the steamer was plain

evidence of that. Already Prosperity was flooding into America — that prosperity upon which our President congratulated the country in his Thanksgiving address.

But is that prosperity a good thing for the American people just now? Aside from the speculation excited by the superabundance of gold in our banks, there is the envy of hungry Europe to be reckoned with a few months or years hence, after the close of the great war, an envy that might readily be translated into predatory action under certain circumstances, as some thoughtful Americans are beginning to perceive. Eastern America, where the war money has largely settled, is already fearful, desires to arm the nation to protect its prosperity. And there is the more subtle, the more profound danger that this undigested war bloat of ours will dull the American vision still further to the real issue at stake — the kind of world we are willing, the kind of soul we wish, to possess. Can we safely digest the prosperity that the happy accident of our temporary isolation and the prudent policies of our Government have given us? Are we not feeding a cancer that will take another war to cut from our vitals?

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Most of us on board were Americans going about our businesses on a belligerent nation's ship in defiance of Mr. Bryan's advice. The man

next to me was building a new munitions plant for France, and beyond him was the European manager for a large American corporation whose factories have been taken over by the German Government. He was returning to America to enter the munitions business in Pittsburg or Connecticut. To these commercial travelers of war the European struggle meant, naturally, first of all money, the opportunity of a lifetime to make money quickly; it meant also less vividly helping the Allies, who needed everything they could get from us and were willing to pay almost any price for it. Sometimes they talked of the long list of "accidents" that were happening daily in American factories and genially cursed the hyphenated Germans. As for the other sort of Germans they felt vaguely that some day America must reckon with them, too. Evidently they put small faith in the "three thousand miles of cool sea-water" as a nonconductor of warfare! So here was another aspect of the war — the possible dangers to us, without a friend in the world, as every one agreed. And we talked "preparedness" in the usual desultory way. The munitions men seemed to think that they were patriotically working for their own country in getting "the plant" of war into being. "Some day we shall need guns and shells too!" Afterwards I found in America that this vague fear of probable enemies had seized hold of the country quite generally, and that the very

Government which had done nothing toward settling the present war rightly was planning for "defense" with a prodigal hand. Peaceful America was getting alarmed — of what?

There were also in our number some young doctors and nurses who were returning from the hospitals in France for a little needed rest. They were of those young Americans who are giving themselves so generously for the cause, eager, courageous, sympathetic. They seemed to me to have gotten most from the war of all us Americans, much more than the munitions men who were making money so fast. In Belgium, in Serbia, behind the French lines, in the great hospital at Neuilly, they had got comprehension and all the priceless rewards of pure giving. They had seen horror, suffering, and waste indescribable; but they had seen heroism and devotion and chivalry. And with them should be joined all the tender-hearted and generous Americans at home who have aided their efforts, who are working with the energy of the American character "for the cause." Alas, already the word was coming of a relaxation in the generosities, the devotions, the enthusiasms of these Americans. Other interests were coming into our rapid activities to distract us from last year's sympathies. . . .

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So as we rolled on through the soft summer night while the passengers discussed the latest

Russian reverse of which news had been received by wireless, I kept asking myself, — "What does it really mean to us? To vast, rich, young America?" Surely not merely more money, more power, even a loftier inspiration for the few who have given themselves generously in sympathy and aid. After all, these were but incidental. The threat we were beginning to feel to our own security, this campaign for "preparedness," did not seem of prime, moving importance. Probably in our bewildered state of mind we should wrangle politically about the matter of how much defense we needed, then drop some more hundreds of millions into the bottomless pit of governmental extravagance and waste. We had already spent enough to equip another Germany! When peace was finally made in Europe, we would forget our fears; our Congressmen and their parasites would fatten on the new appropriations, which would be as actually futile as all their predecessors had been. No; these were hardly the significant aspects of the war to us as a people.

No more was that acrobatic exhibition of diplomatic tight-rope walking we had witnessed from Washington. Mere "words, words, words, professor!" Our dialectic President had thus far failed to establish any one of his contentions, either with Germany or Great Britain, nor did it seem likely that he ever could. While he was still modifying that awkward phrase, "strict

accountability," Germany obviously would murder whomsoever it suited her purpose to murder, and England would hold up any ship that attempted to trade with Germany. All those neutral rights for which Washington was paying big cable tolls had not been advanced an atom. The time had gone by when our strong voice could compel respect from the barbarian, could hearten the soul of other weaker neutrals. Europe had taken our exact measure. We should have saved some dignity had we not murmured more than a formal protest. . . .

And yet, returning from "war-ridden Europe" I was more convinced than of anything else in life that what was being slowly settled in that grim trench-land over there did mean something to us — more, much more than money or neutral rights or sympathetic charities. Not that I was apprehensive of an immediate German raid on New York, the crumbling of her sky-scrapers and the exaction of colossal indemnities. For it looked to me that Germany might well have other occupation after peace was made in Europe, whichever way the war should go. The German peril did not lie, I thought, in her big guns, her ships, her "Prussianized machine." It lay deeper, in herself, in her image of the world. If Germany could win even a partial victory under that monstrous creed of applied materialism, illuminated as it had been with every sort of cynical crime, with its reasoned defiance of

contract, its principle of "indispensable severities," its "military reasons," *that* must become inexorably the law of the world — the barbarians' law. Germany would have made the morality of the world! And of all the world's peoples to accept the victor's new reading of the commandments, proud America would be the first. For we cannot resist the fascination of success. The German aim, the German tyranny over the individual, the German morality — one for you and me as individuals and another utterly lawless one when we get together in a social state — would be imitated more than the German lesson of thoroughness in civil and military organization. Hypnotized by German success, we should not discipline ourselves, which is the German lesson, so much as we should riot in the moral license of the German creed. Americans would worship at the altar of that queer "old German god," who apparently encourages rape, murder, arson, and tyranny in his followers. For in young America, with every social tradition in its seething blood, there is already an insidious tendency to accept this new-old religion of triumphant force. American "Big Business" can understand the Kaiser's philosophy, can reverence his "old German god" when he brings victory, more than any other people outside of Germany. For it, too, believes in "putting things over" with a strong hand. There is not an argument of the German militarist propaganda that would not

find a sympathetic echo somewhere in the headquarters of American corporations.

* * *

When the old fourteen-knot steamer finally dropped anchor off quarantine in New York Harbor and the reporters came on board with the dust of America on their shoes, the roar of America in their voices, I was surer than ever that this greatest of world wars meant a vast deal more to us than trade or charity or politics, which is what we seem to be making of it for the most part. It means the form which our national character is to take ultimately. The German peril, which is held before the public in moving pictures and in alarmist appeals for "preparedness," is already in our midst, not so much at work blowing up our factories as insidiously at work in our hearts. The German apologist — even of Anglo-Saxon blood — is suggesting the reasonableness of a German verdict. "After all," one hears from his lips, "there is much on the other side of the shield, which our English prejudices have prevented us from seeing. Germany cannot be the monster of barbarism that she has been painted. As for broken treaties, the atrocities, the submarines, the murder of Edith Cavell, and her rough work over here, — well, we must remember it is war, and the Russian Cossacks have not been saints! . . . As to her military autocracy, perhaps a little of it would

not be a bad thing for America. At any rate, Germany seems to have the power — it is useless to think of putting her down. . . . The American public will forget all about German crimes once Germany is victorious." "Nothing succeeds like success." "There is always a reason for success," etc. Which cynical acceptance proves that we have already "committed adultery in our hearts."

There are many voices in the air, too many. Americans have not yet found themselves in this crisis of world tragedy, and the Government at Washington has not helped them to an understanding. We are vastly relieved at not finding ourselves "involved" and accept shabby verbal subterfuges as a triumph of American diplomacy. Meanwhile the Lusitania incident has been conveniently forgotten, with the awkward phrase "strictly accountable." Along the eastern seaboard the anxious and the timid are clamoring for "defense" — against what? The talkative pacifists, who would make a grotesque farce of the bloody sacrifice by a futile peace, are bringing further ridicule and contempt on their country with their impertinent if well-meant efforts. Meantime, the money-makers have taken this occasion to stage a spectacular bull market, grumbling on the fruits of war! And there is the "good-time" side to American life. For a few brief months after the outbreak of the war Americans were staggered by the

awfulness of the tragedy and moved under its shadow. Their hearts went out in sympathy, in feeding the dispossessed, and sending aid to the wounded. We spent less on ourselves, partly because of financial fear, partly because of our desire to give, partly because our hearts were too heavy to play. But already that serious mood is passing, and to-day as a people we are hard at it again, chasing a good time. We feel once more the same old lustful urge to get and enjoy. . . . The other night as I looked out on the peopled sea of the New York opera-house, with its women richly dressed and jeweled, its white-faced men, leading the same life of easy prodigal expense, of sensual gratification, I remembered another opera staged in the mysterious twilight of Bayreuth where from the gloom emerged the hoarse bass of Fafner's cry, — "I lie here possessing!" The voice of the great worm proved to be the voice of Germany. Is it ours also?

* * *

Do we Americans desire to have our world Germanized? Not in art and language and customs, though may Heaven preserve us from that fate also! But Germanized in soul? Do we want the German image or the Latin image of the world to prevail? And are we strong enough in our own ideal to resist a "peaceful penetration" by triumphant Germany into our minds and hearts? That is the urgent matter for us. No amount

spent on big guns, superdreadnoughts, submarines, and continental guards — no amount of peace talk — can keep the German peril out of America if we surrender our souls to her creed, now that Germany seems to be imposing it successfully with her armies in Europe. Those dirty *poilus* in the front trenches are, indeed, fighting our battle for us, if we did but know it!

II

The Choice

WE have all sinned, your people as well as mine, the English, the French, the Germans, all, all of us, — but Germany has sinned most." When M. Hanotaux spoke these words with a Hebraic fervor of conviction, I did not have to be told what he meant. The people of our time have sinned through their hot desire for material possession of the earth and its riches — through commercialism, capitalism, call it what you will. Each great nation has made its selfish race for economic advancement at the expense of other peoples: commercial rivalry has largely begotten this bloody war, which is essentially a predatory raid by one barbarous tribe against the riches of its neighbors. Whether England or Russia under similar circumstances would have dared a similar attack on the liberties of the world is open to speculation. To Germany alone, however, has been reserved the distinction of elevating greed and the lust of power to the dignity of a philosophic system, a creed with the religious sanction of that "old German god" to smite the rivals of the Fatherland and take away their wealth. It is because Germany has made a consistent monster out of her materialistic inter-

pretation of modern science that she is now held up before the nations of the world as a spectacle and a warning. "We have all sinned" in believing that the body is more than the spirit, that food and pleasure and power are the primary ends of all living; but Germany alone has had the effrontery to justify her cynicism by conscious theory and to teach it systematically to all her people. She has endowed with life a philosophical idea, given it the personality of her people, created a national Frankenstein to be feared and loathed. More, she is coming perilously nigh to imposing her god upon the world!

We have all worshiped at the shrine of material achievement — in America with the riot of young strength. England, like old King Amfortas, is now bleeding from the sins of her youth and calling in vain for some Parsifal to deliver her from their penalty. She has built her rich civilization on a morass of exploited millions, and her Nemesis is that in her hour of peril her sodden millions strike and drink and feel no imperative urge to give their lives for an England that sucked her prosperity from their veins. In the race for commercial supremacy the Latin nations — Italy, Spain, and France — have been deemed inferior to Germany, England, and the United States, because they were less tainted with the lust of possession, less materialistic in their reading of life, less powerful in their grasp upon economic opportunity than their rivals. In the Latin coun-

tries industry yet remains largely on the small scale, which is economically wasteful, but which does not build up fabulous wealth at the expense of the individual worker. The great corporation designed for the rapid creation of wealth has not found that congenial home on Latin soil which it has on ours, or on German soil. And this fact accounts for the touch of handicraft lingering in the product of Latin industry, for the strength and health individually of their working classes, for their fervor of devotion to the national tradition. The Latin has never forgotten the claims of the individual life: democracy to him is more than the right to vote. Therefore, pure art, pure science, pure literature — also the world of ideas — has a larger part in the life of Latin peoples than with us in the eternal struggle with the materialistic forces of life. To the Latin living is not solely the gratification of the body. He reckons on the intelligence and the spirit of man as well.

* * *

It may seem to some that throughout these pages I have spoken paradoxically of the world war as primarily a struggle between the Latin and the Germanic ideal, ignoring the significance of Russia and of England. In spite of the heroic resistance of the French and the pertinacious thrust of the Italians against the steel wall in which Austria has bound them, the Latin forces engaged are obviously less than half of the Allied

Powers. On the sea England is virtually alone. Nevertheless, I see the struggle as a Latin-German one, the great decision as essentially a decision between these two types of ideals. All else is relative and accidental. Apart from the surprising vitality developed by the two Latin peoples, their astonishing force in the brutal struggle for survival, — which has disagreeably put wrong the calculations of their enemy, — it is the mental and spiritual leadership of the world which is being fought for rather than the physical. The ideas and the ideals under which the Allies are fighting, which can be simply summed up however divergent their manifestations, are French, are Latin ideas and ideals, not English, not Russian. The spirit of the cause to which England has lent her imperial supremacy and Russia her undeveloped strength is Latin, and since the war began the English have widely borne testimony to this fact.

The right of peoples, little as well as strong nations, to live their own lives, to preserve their own political autonomy, to develop their own traditions, is part of the Latin lesson learned in the throes of the great Revolution. It is expressed passionately, wistfully in that universal cry of the French people: "We must end this thing — it must never happen again — we must win the right to live as we see fit, not under the dictation of another!" To the Latin mind the world is peopled by individuals who cannot and should not be pressed in the same political or economic

mould, who must win their individual salvation by an individual struggle and evolution. This is the ideal of liberty the world over, which prompted France to send us help in our struggle with England. It is a wasteful, an uneconomic ideal, as we Americans have proved in our slovenly administration of our great inheritance. Yet we would not have a machine-made, autocratic organization, no matter how clean and thrifty and efficient it might make our cities. We prefer the slow process of conversion to the machine process of coercion. And that is one source of our sympathy with French civilization. Let us have all liberty to its possible limit short of license: the Latin intelligence has known how to preserve liberty from becoming license. The result in the human being of the principle of liberty is individual intelligence and spiritual power; those are the high ideals toward which democracy aims. The cost of them is efficiency, organization — immediate results which German discipline obtains. But the cost of the German ideal is the humanity of life, and that is too big a price to pay. That there should be found many among us who are willing to exchange the spiritual flower of our civilization for the sake of a more efficient social organization is evidence of the extent to which the cancer of a materialistic commercialism has already eaten into our life.

* * *

The Latin vision of life includes chivalry, as has been abundantly revealed by the spirit of the French, sorely tried in their struggle with the new barbarian. Chivalry means beauty of conduct, an uneconomic, a sentimental ideal, but without which the life of man on this earth would be forlorn, lacking in dignity, in meaning. Take from mankind the shadowy dream of himself implied in his desire for a chivalrous world, and you leave him a naked animal from the jungle, more despicable the more skillful he becomes in gratifying his lusts. The Latin vision of life includes also beauty of art, man's radiation of his inner spiritual world, and closely woven with the love of art is respect for tradition — reverence for the past which has been bequeathed to him by his ancestors, which is incorporated in his blood.

We in America have striven for these beauties of chivalry, art, and tradition. We have striven to put them into our lives often blindly, crudely. We have borrowed and bought what we could not create; instinctively we pay homage to what is beyond our industrial power to make, confessing the inadequacy of our materialism to satisfy our souls. We, too, demand a world in which beauty of conduct, beauty of manners, and beauty of art shall be cultivated to give meaning to our lives. The bombardment of Rheims, the murder of Edith Cavell are as shameful to the American mind as to the French, and as

incomprehensible. These are not matters of reason, but of instinct — commands of the soul.

* * *

The Latin ideal is not predatory. Whatever they may have done in their past, the Latin peoples to-day are not greedy of conquest. If the Allies win, France will gain little territory. Both Italy and France have limited their territorial ambitions to securing their future safety by establishing frontiers on natural barriers. France also expects indemnity for her huge losses and for outraged Belgium. She must rebuild her home and be freed for generations to come from the inhibiting fear of invasion. One does not feel so confident of England: in the past she has had the pilfering hand. But from prudence if not from shame England may content herself with a reestablished prestige and a tranquil Europe. Russia has already reconciled herself to relinquishing Poland, and except for her natural ambition to enter the Mediterranean she seems without predatory desires. Russia, it should not be forgotten, took up arms to protect her own kin from the Austrians. The Slav and the Latin have a spiritual sympathy that cannot exist between the Latin and the Teuton, which gives their present union more than an accidental significance.

Whatever secret ambitions may be brewing in the chancelleries of Europe, France has put herself on record against conquest too emphatically

to countenance at the peace conference any predatory rearrangement of the map of Europe. She has made the great war a struggle of principle — the principle of national liberty against the principle of military conquest. It is this great principle which gives significance to her cause and justifies the awful slaughter and waste of bleeding Europe. If the pretensions of physical might, no matter with what excuses, can be thoroughly defeated, proved to be an impossible theory of life, so that never again in the history of the world will a nation attempt to take with the sword what does not belong to it, the bloody sacrifice will have been well worth making. The issues of the great conflict have been obscured, especially in America, but to the humblest soldier of France they are as clear as blazing sunlight. "Never again!" Never the monstrous pretension that power alone makes right, that the will to eat gives free license to the eater, however great his appetite or his belief in himself. That is the cause of all the world, for which the French are willing to give all that they have. And I know no cause more important to be settled for the future of the human race.

* * *

Are we not interested in the right decision of this cause? A peaceable people, loving our own way, jealous of interference, we should assuredly present a lamentable spectacle were we called upon

to defend ourselves against a predatory enemy. Possibly a more lamentable spectacle of inefficiency combined with corruption than England has given the world the past year! And at last we are becoming aware that our policy of selfish isolation does not mean immunity from attack. We are realizing that those "three thousand miles of cool sea-water" no longer make an effectual barrier against the ingenuity of modern men.

But I would not put the matter on the selfish basis of our own security. It is vastly larger than that. It is, vitally, what manner of world we wish to have for ourselves and our children. At the invasion of Belgium, America gave with splendid unanimity the response: Americans did not want the German world ! Since then, alas, it would seem that the clear moral reaction of our people to the demonstration of the world struggle has been gradually weakening: we are becoming confused, permitting insidious reasoners to cloud the issue, listening to the prompting of the beast in our own bellies, hesitating, dividing, excusing, evading the great question — "seeing both sides." As if there were two sides to such a plain issue stripped of all its fallacies and subterfuges and lies! Do we wish to have American life take on the moral and intellectual and artistic color of German ideals? Do we prefer the "old German god" to the culture and humanities we have inherited from the Latin tradition? . . . "We, too, have sinned." In our

blood is all the crude materialism of a triumphant Germany without her discipline and her organization. We, too, are ready to enter the fierce war of commercial rivalry with England and Germany. We, too, believe in the good of economic expansion, though dubious about our own imperialism. Surely no people that ever lived stood hesitating so dangerously at the cross-roads as America at this hour. Prudence has prevented us as a nation from pronouncing that moral verdict on the cause which might have had decisive weight in hastening the world decision. But a selfish timidity cannot prevent us individually from realizing the immense importance to us of the decision that is being ground out in the tears and blood of Europe. And no ideal of diplomatic neutrality can prevent Americans who care for anything but their own selfish well-being from doing all in their power to make ours a Latin rather than a Teutonic world.

Every soldier who dies in the trenches of France, who bears a maimed and disfigured body through life, is giving himself for us, so that we may live in a world where individual rights and liberties are respected, where beauty of conduct and beauty of art may endure, where life means more than the satisfaction of bodily appetites.

III

Peace

THE real cynics of the war are the pacifists. They see nothing more serious in the European agony than what can be disposed of easily at any time in a peace conference — by talk and adjustment. So obsessed are some of them by the slaughter of men, by the woe and travail of Europe, that they would turn the immense sacrifice into a grotesque farce by any sort of compromise — a peace that could be no peace, merely the armistice for further war. Their eyes are so blinded by the economic waste of the war and its suffering that they are incapable of seeing the great underlying principle that must be decided. Americans, having evaded the responsibility of pronouncing a decisive moral judgment on the rape of Belgium, the sinking of the Lusitania, and the extermination of the Armenians, play the buffoon with women's peace conferences, peace ships, and endless impertinent peace talk. We, who have forfeited our right to sit at the peace conference, who are busily making money off the war, having prudently kept our own skins out of danger, are officiously ready with proposals of peace. What a peace! The

only peace that could be made to-day would be a dastardly treason to every one of the millions whose blood has watered Europe, to every woman who has given a son or a father or a husband to the settlement of the cause. The parochialism of the American intelligence has never been more humiliatingly displayed than in the activities of our busy peacemakers.

* * *

No sane person believes in war. The sordidness and the horror of war have never been so fully revealed as during this past year. War has been stripped of its every romantic feature. Modern war is worse than hell — it is pure insanity. We do not need peace foundations, peace conferences, peace ships to demonstrate the awfulness of war. But crying peace, thinking peace, willing peace will not bring peace unless conditions that make peace exist. Here in America we use the word peace too loosely, as if it meant some absolute state of being which we had achieved through our innate wisdom rather than from the happy accident of our world position. But peace is an entirely relative term, as any one who has given heed to the social conditions we have created should realize. We have enjoyed a certain kind of peace, the value of which is debatable. And now, alarmed at the exposed condition of our eastern seaboard, we are agitatedly preparing to arm to protect ourselves — from what? From

Germany? Or is it from England? And still we recommend an instant peace to Europe!

Awful as are the waste and suffering caused by war, hideous as modern warfare is, there are worse evils for humanity. To my thinking the perpetuation of the lawless, materialistic creed of the new Germany would be infinitely worse for the world than any war could be. When the German tide broke into Belgium and poured out over northern France, sweeping all before it, killing, burning, raping, the pacifists no doubt would have accepted the conqueror as the will of God and have made peace then! . . . There are none more eager for peace than the soldiers in the trenches who are giving their lives to press back the barbarian flood. But no peace until their "work has been done, the cause won." I have heard Americans express the fear that European civilization is in danger of annihilation from the prolonged conflict. Even that were preferable to submission to the wrong ideal. But I see, rather, the possibility of a higher civilization through the settlement of fundamental principles, the reaffirmation of necessary laws. It is surely with this abiding faith that the enormous sacrifices are being freely made by the allied nations. "It is of little importance what happens to us," a Frenchman said to me in Rheims, whose home had been destroyed that morning, whose son had already been killed in the trenches. "There will be a better world for

the generations to come because of what we have endured." That is what the American pacifist cannot seem to understand — the necessity of present sacrifice for a better future, the cost in blood and agony of ultimate principles.

* * *

This war is leading us all back to the basic commonplaces of thinking. Is life under any and all conditions worth the having? Our reason says not. It tells us that the diseased and the weak-minded should not be permitted to breed, that an anæmic existence under degenerating influences is not worth calling life. We shudder in our armchairs at the thought of "cannon food," but why not shudder equally at the words "factory food," "mine food," and "sweat-shop food"? We are inclined to sentimentalize over those brave lives that have been spent by the hundreds of thousands on the battlefields of France and Poland, but for the most part we live placidly unconscious of the lives ground out in industrial competition all about us. Between the two methods of eating up, of maiming, of suppressing human lives, the battle method may be the more humane — I should prefer it for myself, for my child. What our pacifists desire is not so much peace as bloodlessness. We should be honest enough to recognize that for many human beings, — possibly a majority even in our prosperous, war-free society, — a violent death

may not be by any means the worst event. And it may be the happiest if the individual is convinced that the sacrifice of his existence will help others to realize a better life. That is the hope, the faith of every loyal soldier who dies for his country, of every soldier's father and mother who pays with a son for the endurance of those ideals more precious than life itself.

The higher one rises in consciousness, the more nearly free and self-determined life becomes, the greater are the rewards of complete sacrifice. There are many who have "fallen on the field of honor" whose lives, if lived out under normal peace conditions, might have meant much to themselves, possibly to humanity. They have given themselves freely, without question, for what seems to them of more importance than life. Wounded, mutilated past all usefulness, dying, they have not rebelled. Doctors and nurses in the hospitals tell the story of their endurance without complaint of their bitter fate. Much as we must feel the awful price which they have felt obliged to pay, it is not sentimental to say that the finer spirits among them have lived more fully in the few crowded weeks of their struggle than if they had been permitted to live out their lives in all the gratifications of our comfortable civilization. Letters from them give an extraordinary revelation of priceless qualities gained by these soldiers through complete renunciation and sacrifice. War, it must not be denied,

is a great developer as well as a destroyer of life. Nothing else, it would seem, in our present state of evolution presses the cup of human experience so full of realization and understanding as battle and death. The men who are paying for their beliefs with their lives are living more in moments and hours than we who escape the ordeal can ever live. For life cannot be measured by time or comfort or enjoyment. It is too subtle for that! A supreme effort, even a supreme agony, may have more real living worth than years of "normal" existence. The youths whose graves now dot so plentifully the pleasant fields of France have drunk deeper than we can fathom of the mystery of life.

As for the nation, that greater mother for whose existence they have given their individual lives, there is even less question of the benefit of this war. We Americans are fond of measuring loss and gain in figures: we reckon up the huge war debts, the toll of killed and wounded, and against this heavy account we set down — nothing. It is all dead loss. Yet even to-day, in the crisis of their struggle, there is not a Frenchman who will not admit the immense good that has already come to his people, that will come increasingly out of the bloody sacrifice. The war has united all individuals, swept aside the trivial and the base, revealed the nation to itself. The French have discovered within their souls and shown before the world qualities, unsuspected

or forgotten, of chivalry, steadfastness, seriousness, and they have renewed their familiar virtues of bravery and good humor and intelligence. The French soldier, the French citizen, and the French woman are to-day marvelously moulded in the heroic type of their best tradition: in the full sense of the word they are gallant — chivalrous, self-forgetful, devoted. Is there any price too great to pay for such a resurrection of human nobility?

The pacifist is fain to babble of the "disciplines of peace." No one denies them. But how can humanity be compelled to embrace these disciplines of peace? The German lesson of thoroughness and social organization and responsibility was as necessary before the war as it is to-day, but neither England nor France, neither Russia nor our own America gave heed to it until the terrible menace of extermination in this war ground the lesson into their unwilling souls. It may be lamentable that humanity should still be held so firmly in the grip of biologic law that it must kill and be killed in order to save itself, but there are things worse than death. Until humanity learns the secret of self-discipline it will create diseases that can be eradicated only with the knife; it is merely blind to assume that the insanity of war can be prevented by any system of parliamenting, or litigation, or paper schemes of international arbitration. Some issues are of a primary importance, unarguable,

fundamental. No man — and no nation — is worthy of life who is not ready to lay it down in their settlement. I know that some Americans are still unable to perceive that any such fundamental principle is at stake in Europe to-day. Extraordinary as it seems to me I hear intelligent men refer to the great war as if it were a local quarrel of no real consequence to us. Even the humblest *poilu* in the trenches, the simplest working-woman in France, know that they are giving themselves not merely in the righteous cause of self-defense, but in the world's cause in defense of its best tradition, its highest ideals. Their cause is big enough to consecrate them.

* * *

Therefore a new, a larger, a more vital life has already begun for invaded and unconquered France! In order to reap the blessings of war, a nation must have an irreproachable cause, and aside from Belgium, France has the clearest record of all the belligerents in this world war. She will gain most from it, not in land or wealth, but in honor and moral strength, in dignity and pride. She is ready to pay the great price for her soul. This is the one supreme inspiration that the French are giving an admiring world — their readiness to give all rather than yield to the evil that threatens them. With the light of such nobility in one's eyes, it is difficult, indeed, to be patient with the cynical clamor of comfortable

neutrals for peace at any price. If there is anything of dignity and meaning in human life, it lies in selfless devotion to beliefs, to principles; it is readiness to sacrifice happiness, life, all, in their defense.

And that is patriotism in its larger aspect. Our intellectuals discuss coldly the primitive quality of patriotism and its unexpected recrudescence in this world war. They talk of it in the jargon of social science as "group consciousness." Before I felt its fervor in the crisis of Italy's decision, in the sublime endurance of the French, I did not realize what patriotism might mean. It is not merely the instinctive love for the land of birth, loyalty to the known and familiar. Much more than that! The natal soil is but the symbol. Patriotism is human loyalty to the deeper, better part of one's own being, to the loves and the ideals and the beliefs of one's race. It is the love of family, of land, of tongue, of religion, of the woman who bore you and of the woman you get with child, of the God you reverence. It is loyalty to life as it has been poured into you by your forefathers, to those ideals which your race has conceived and given to the world. "*Viva Italia!*" "*Vive la France!*" is a prayer of the deepest, purest sort that the Italian or the Frenchman can breathe. Without these subconscious devotions and loyalties the human animal would be a forlorn complex of mind and sense. Those amorphous beings who, thanks to our modern econo-

mic wealth, have become "citizens of the world," who wander physically and intellectually from land to land, who taste of this and that without incorporating any supreme devotion in their blood, our cosmopolites and expatriates and intellectuals, froth of a too comfortable existence, give forth a hollow sound at the savage touch of war. They become pacifists. They can see neither good nor evil: all is a vague blur of "humanity."

Patriotism is the supreme loyalty to life of the individual. Wherever this loyalty is instinctive, vivid, there some precious tradition has been bequeathed to a people that still burns in their blood. Latin patriotism is ardent like man's one great love for woman, ennobling the giver as well as the loved one; it is tender like the son's love for the mother, with the sanctity of acknowledgment of the debt of life. Can any vision of "internationalism" take the place of these powerful personal loyalties to racial ideals? . . . "Mere boys led to the slaughter" is the sentimentality one hears of the marching conscripts of European armies. Better even so than the curse of no supreme allegiance, or devotion, or readiness to sacrifice — than the aimless selfishness in which our American youth are brought up!

* * *

For every boy in Europe knows, as soon as he knows anything, that he owes one certain fixed debt, and that is service to his country, to that

larger whole that has given him the best part of his own being. If need be, he owes it his life itself. It is an obligation he must fulfill before all other obligations, at no matter what inconvenience or sacrifice to himself, unquestioningly, immediately. What takes the place for the American youth of this primary obligation? Himself! He is expensively nurtured, schooled, put forward into life — for what? To help himself as best he can at the general table of society. He can never forget himself, subordinate his personal ambition to any transcendent loyalty. He becomes from his cradle the egotist.

To-day under the shadow of world war we are taking thought of national protection, projecting schemes of defense including the enrollment of citizens who may be called upon to fight for their country. It is less important to teach our youth the military lessons of self-protection than it is to teach them the greater lesson of self-forgetfulness, of devotion to a national ideal — so that they may be ready to give their lives for that national ideal as the youth of Europe have given their lives to settle this world cause. Not a few hundreds of thousands of national guards, then, in order to secure ourselves from invasion are what we need, but that every man or woman born into the nation or adopting it as home should be made to feel the obligation of national service. It matters less what form that service should take, whether purely military or partly military

and partly social. It is the service, the sense of obligation that counts for the individual and for the nation. The responsibility of service teaches the importance of ideas, the necessity of sacrifice. And he who is ready to sacrifice himself, to forget himself and become absorbed in the life that surrounds him, of which he is but an infinitesimal unit, to which he owes the best in him, has already achieved a larger peace than the pacifist dreams of.

* * *

Consider what happened to the youth of France a little more than a year ago. Suddenly with no preparation or warning they were called to defend their country from invasion. It was no longer possible to argue the rights of that diplomatic tangle into which European statesmen had muddled. Whatever the ultimate truth, the ultimate right of the controversy, the state — that larger self which was their home, their mesh of loves and interests and beliefs — demanded their service. The youth of France had been brought up with the knowledge that any day such a sacrifice might be required, with the consciousness deeply rooted in their beings that one of the necessary conditions of their living was to give their all at the call of the state. They conceived of no honorable alternative: it was as inevitable to pay this obligation as it is for decently minded citizens to pay their legal debts.

They hurried to their mobilization posts, donned uniforms and equipment, and were shipped away in regiments to the front. Most of them did not worry about the possibility of death, but acted like all healthy human beings, ignoring what they could not affect, caught up in the novelty and the requirements of the new life. Yet deep in the consciousness of the most careless must have lain some thought that he might never return, that the cross-marked grave on the hillside, the pit, or the hospital might be waiting for him.

This consciousness that he can no longer dispose of himself, at least for the finer spirit, must act as a great release. Having accepted his fate, and therefore willed it as the only possible choice for him, he becomes another person, a largely selfless person, a strangely older, calmer being capable of thinking and acting clearly, nobly. Once the great personal decision made, the resolve to forego life and happiness and personal achievement, a clogging burden of selfish considerations drop from within. So one can read the experience of those two young officers preserved in Henry Bordeaux's "Two Heroes." They were free as never before to do what lay before them, — their officers' duty, — simply, directly. Many things that they had previously valued seemed to have lost color, to have become trivial. They thought solely of acquitting themselves with honor in what it was their fate to do. They were ready to obey because before death they were

humble. They had begun to glimpse the blind mystery that is life, in which every one must needs act his part without questioning, with faith in its ultimate meaning, with the will to trust its end. They were brave because they were simple and single-hearted, selfless. They were strong because they disdained to be weak, having renounced all. If it were to be their fate to die unnoted, they were content with the satisfaction of having done what was expected of them. And if they died in glory, they were unaware of their honor, believing that they had done no more than any of their fellows would have done in the same opportunity.

Thus, having laid down their lives for the cause that commanded their faith and loyalty, they found their real lives — larger, more beautiful, stronger. . . . Not once, but many thousands of times, has this miracle happened! Their graves are strewn, singly and in groups, over every field of eastern France. They paid the debt, did their part little or great, unknown or glorified by men. Literally they have given their blood for the soil of their fathers' land.

* * *

We know that they have given much more than their blood to that soil. Just as at the call to arms, the selfish, the mean, the vicious qualities of these lives dropped from them in the freedom of sacrifice accepted, and in place of egotistic

preoccupations rose once more to the surface of their natures the ancient virtues of their race, so in their going they left for the others who lived, who were to be born, a tremendous legacy of honor and noble responsibility. By watering the soil with their blood they have made it infinitely more precious for every human being that treads upon it. They have helped to make mere life more significant for those who remain to mourn them. It can never again be quite the same commonplace affair, so lightly, cheaply spent, as it had been before. They have not left behind them joy, but faith. And that is why the faces of the earnest living who are able to realize this sacrifice of youth have a grave sternness in them which touches even the most careless stranger. Something of the glory created by the dead and the wounded radiates out even to us in a distant, peaceful land. . . .

But why, we ask, all this sacrifice, this cruel, agonizing sacrifice of war? That is a mystery too deep for any to fathom. It is better not to probe too insistently, to accept it as the man in Rheims, — "It must be better for the others afterward because of what we have endured." That is the expression of faith in life which is the better part of any religion. For what we suffer now, for what we give now of our most precious, it will be repaid to those who are to come. Life will be freer, grander, more significant: it will be a better world. Nobody who has seen or felt the

heavy tragedy of this world war could endure its horror if he were not sustained by that faith. But with that faith the losses seem not too vast. One by one the world's great decisions must be made, in suffering, in blood and tears. Peace comes not through evasion or compromise, either for the individual or for the state.

THE END

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